

World News Update_ Aug 14 2026

Europe's 1st total solar eclipse in 27 years draws crowds across the continent

Eclipse glasses are needed to safely view the sun during most phases of a solar eclipse.

[Yahoo News](#) Thu, August 13, 2026

On Wednesday, Europe experienced its first total solar eclipse in 27 years. Many flocked to witness it — even though parts of the continent were only able to view a partial eclipse. A solar eclipse occurs when the moon moves between the Earth and the sun, blocking the view of the sun. Today, [roughly one billion people](#) experienced fully or partially dark skies as the rare event took place. Spain, parts of Portugal, Greenland, Iceland and northern Russia [experienced the total solar eclipse](#), the first in mainland Europe since 1999. Meanwhile, the rest of Europe saw a partial solar eclipse, as did Canada, northwestern Africa and parts of the northern U.S.

London's Royal Observatory Greenwich was one such place to host a watch party for the eclipse. Thanks to clear skies, the celestial event was easy to view — though many people [struggled to find and purchase eclipse glasses](#) ahead of the event in order to safely witness it



“1 in Several Hundred Million”: The Convergence of 3 Heavenly Events on August 12th Is so Rare That it Will Never Happen Again

Sunday, August 9, 2026 15:43

We will witness a convergence of celestial events that is truly extraordinary. On August 12th, we will be able to see a parade of 6 planets in the sky, a total solar eclipse and the peak of the Perseid meteor shower all on the same day. These three events “have never all occurred on the same day in recorded modern astronomical history”. And the probability of all three events taking place on the same day is “roughly 1 in several hundred million”. Could it be possible that The Creator is using the heavens to try to get our attention? If so, could it be possible that incredibly significant events are about to happen?

August 12th will probably be the most spectacular day for heavenly events since the Great American Eclipse of April 8th, 2024. Needless to say, all sorts of historic events have occurred since that total solar eclipse.



We knew this Super El Niño would be intense. But it could end up being even worse than anticipated

Andrew Freedman, CNN

Mon, July 6, 2026 at 2:00 PM GMT+2

Scientists have been keeping a close eye on the tropical Pacific Ocean for months now, anticipating the emergence of an intense, ["Super" El Niño](#) that would be among the stronger events on record. Now it looks like this El Niño could set the benchmark for peak intensity, with potentially dire implications for the [extreme weather events](#) it influences worldwide.

El Niño is poised to rapidly strengthen in the tropical Pacific Ocean during the next few months and is forecast to reach the upper echelon of intensity by the time it peaks in late fall to early winter, forecasters warn.

It's already being referred to colloquially as a Super El Niño. Only a handful of events have reached that level of intensity in the last few decades, with the most recent one occurring in 2015 to 2016.

But now some computer models are predicting this El Niño could be stronger than any other event, back to at least 1950. "I think it's fair to say that, depending on [the] model, the forecasts are close to unprecedented," said Michael Tippett, an atmospheric scientist at Columbia University, in an email.

El Niño is a periodic weather cycle that features hotter-than-normal ocean temperatures in the equatorial tropical Pacific, along with corresponding shifts in weather patterns across this region. The shifts that occur here then have global repercussions.

During El Niño events, tremendous amounts of heat are transferred from the ocean to the atmosphere, elevating global average temperatures and increasing the likelihood of worldwide extreme weather events.

Recent computer model projections have trended toward a more intense El Niño at its peak strength compared to previous simulations, which indicates it has an even greater chance of causing global disruption. It could create flooding in some regions and drought in others, along with heat waves and other damaging impacts.

In addition to the weather-related disasters, El Niño events can also affect agriculture. For example, El Niño has been known to depress the rice yield in India and other parts of Asia, which can lead to food price inflation.

The World Meteorological Organization, which is the United Nations' weather arm, is urging officials around the world to prepare for El Niño-related impacts. The WMO is also seeking to mobilize UN agencies to anticipate the potential for extreme events that may require a humanitarian response.

"The consensus is definitely shifting towards an even stronger event," said Zeke Hausfather, a climate scientist who is closely following El Niño model projections.

"The model runs have been consistently showing higher probabilities for a very strong event compared to a few months ago, and every month sees higher estimates," he said. "Currently, the odds of seeing a record-strong El Niño event this year are quite large."

More in Science

While the newer model runs don't guarantee that El Niño will be as intense as they depict, they do illustrate a trend — and that prediction is bolstered by what is already taking place. For example, over the past month, ocean temperatures in the region of the ocean that scientists monitor for El Niño have been running record warm for this time of year as hot water sloshes from the western Pacific to the east, reinforcing and boosting the intensity of the El Niño.

However, there's a major wild card in play: A planet warmed by human-caused climate change. There has never been an El Niño of this projected intensity while the world was already so hot. Right now, global sea surface [temperatures are at record highs](#), and worldwide air temperatures are tracking toward another top five warmest year.

It is possible that the planet's warm background conditions could modify some of the typical impacts of El Niño, though exactly how is up for debate. The last El Niño to occur, in 2023 to 2024, did not bring some of the typical weather pattern shifts, known to scientists as "teleconnections," but no two El Niños are exactly alike.

The 2023 to 2024 event was not as intense as this one is predicted to be, and stronger El Niño events are more likely to influence weather patterns on multiple continents.

Late last week, the WMO released a statement warning that El Niño is projected to rapidly intensify during the July to September period, bringing with it broad shifts in weather patterns around the globe.

"El Niño conditions are already underway and are forecast to strengthen rapidly into a strong event," WMO Secretary-General Celeste Saulo said in a statement. "This will intensify the risk of heatwaves on land and marine heatwaves in many regions of the world," she said.

For the July through September period, the UN agency issued temperature and precipitation outlooks that each closely match the typical effects from a strong El Niño, though the impacts of El Niño tend to reach their peak during the Northern Hemisphere's winter months.

The WMO update does not address the potential tie between the record-breaking heat waves that have struck Europe and North America so far this spring and summer and El Niño, but it does show

a strong likelihood of above-average temperatures globally during the July through September timeframe

- NEWS
- 23 July 2026

This El Niño is set to be the largest on record by a ‘mind-blowing margin’

Forecasters predict that the monster climate pattern will combine with global warming to push global temperatures in 2027 to new heights.

By

- [James Dinneen](#)



California (Mondos Beach shown here in 2016) often experiences increased storms — and storm waves — during El Niños that can lead to flooding. Credit: Mark Ralston/AFP via Getty

The [El Niño climate pattern](#) that is strengthening in the Pacific Ocean is on track to be the largest one in at least 150 years, researchers said today during a press briefing. If the monster forecasts they presented pan out, the surge of heat that the El Niño will unleash from the ocean, combined with warming from human-

caused climate change, will probably make next year the hottest on record — and cue up extreme weather in many parts of the world.



According to the projections from a suite of climate models, the peak of this El Niño is set to surpass the previous record-holder by “truly, a mind-blowing margin”, says Zeke Hausfather, a climate scientist at Berkeley Earth, a non-profit research organization in California that hosted the briefing.

It’s “not outside the realm of possibility” that the event could combine with climate change to raise global average temperatures in 2027 as high as 1.7 °C above the pre-industrial average, he said at the briefing. This would bring the planet right to the edge of [breaching the 1.5 °C threshold](#) that governments pledged to avoid under the Paris agreement.

The fact that an El Niño is occurring now isn’t surprising. The El Niño–Southern Oscillation (ENSO) is a natural fluctuation in sea surface temperature and winds in the tropical Pacific Ocean. Historically, it has swung between hot El Niños and cool La Niñas every two to seven years. The last El Niño took place in 2023–24 and, after forecasters had [warned of a big event](#) looming, this year’s emerged in June.

But the latest predictions suggest that this El Niño could become even bigger than anticipated. According to Justin Mankin, a climate researcher at Dartmouth College in Hanover, New Hampshire, it looks a lot like the ones that scientists had projected being amplified by human-caused climate change later this century.

Extreme forecasts

The elevated Pacific sea surface temperatures and wind patterns that are the hallmark of an El Niño have rapidly strengthened since June. In its latest [advisory](#), the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) gave a four in five chance of a “very strong” event developing by the end of the year, with near certainty that El Niño conditions will persist until at least April 2027.

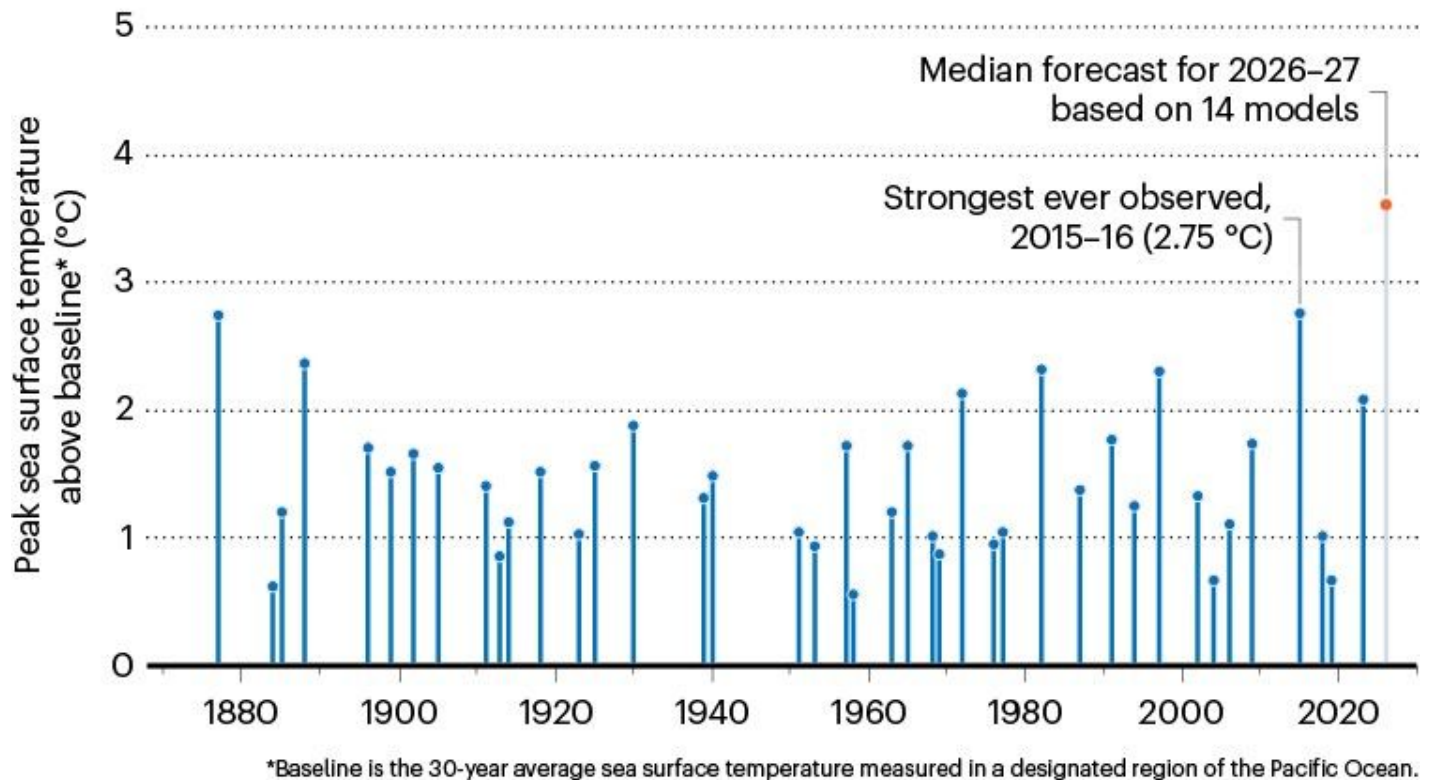
“Right now, we’re seeing all the markers of very vigorous atmosphere–ocean coupling across the equatorial Pacific Ocean, which is giving us more confidence we will ultimately see a ‘very strong’ El Niño that would rank among the strongest El Niños in our historical record,” says Michelle L’Heureux, a meteorologist at NOAA who leads the agency’s ENSO prediction team in College Park, Maryland.

The NOAA forecast could be conservative, however. In [a blog post last week](#) and during the briefing today, Hausfather compared the projections from 14 climate models for this El Niño, and showed that the median

estimate for peak sea surface temperature in the Pacific is about 0.8 °C higher than the previous record set in 2015–16 (see ‘Record breaker’). “It’s by no means a foregone conclusion, but the likelihood has risen month over month,” he said.

RECORD BREAKER

Modelling indicates that the El Niño that began in June could become the strongest ever observed, with peak temperatures in the tropical Pacific Ocean rising around 3.6 °C above average — 0.8 °C above the previous record intensity.



©nature

Source: [Zeke Hausfather](#)/Berkeley Earth

In addition to the El Niño event raising global average temperatures to record highs in 2027, Hausfather says that there’s a fair chance that it will boost temperatures enough in the next few months to make 2026 a record hot year, too. The pattern of heatwaves, droughts, flooding and wildfires associated with El Niño will also have consequences for economies. Mankin and his colleagues have estimated¹ that changes in weather attributed to a strong Super El Nino could cost the world economy more than 10 trillion dollars.

NOAA predicts potentially historic El Nino, with major influence on weather

DAN PECK

Thu, August 13, 2026 at 8:07 PM GMT+3

El Nino conditions continue to intensify and are likely to be very strong, resulting in a potentially historic event in the coming months that could significantly influence our weather, the hurricane season and global temperatures, according to the latest forecast from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

The agency is now highly confident there will be a very strong El Nino during the upcoming Northern Hemisphere fall and winter seasons.

NOAA's latest forecast says that between October and December, there is a 90% chance of a historic event that would exceed the strength of all previous El Nino events on record. The current event ranks as the second strongest on record for this time of the year.



ABC News - PHOTO: Typical El Nino impact.

"Our team has become more confident in the possibility of a very strong El Nino by the end of this year," Michelle L'Heureux, a physical scientist at NOAA's Climate Prediction Center, told ABC News.

"There is a greater than 90% chance of a 'very strong' El Nino, which is the highest chance to date, and expresses our confidence in the growth and development of a potentially historic El Nino event," L'Heureux added.

NOAA noted that with an event of this magnitude, while the chances of experiencing impacts consistent with El Nino are greater, they are not guaranteed.

[El Nino is strengthening: Here's what it means for the US](#)

El Nino refers to the warmer-than-average phase of the [El Nino--Southern Oscillation \(ENSO\)](#), a natural cycle where sea surface temperatures across the central and eastern equatorial Pacific Ocean rise and fall. The cooler-than-average phase is called La Nina, while near-average conditions are known as ENSO-neutral.

NOAA ranks the strength of El Nino events by measuring the sea surface temperature departure from average (anomaly) across this region, classifying events as weak, moderate, strong or very strong.

While adjectives such as "super" and "extreme" are popular ways of describing the strength of an El Nino event on social media, NOAA and the WMO classify the strength as weak to moderate, strong and very strong. The WMO noted in a recent statement that "the term [[super]] is not part of standardized operational classifications."



Gary Hershorn/Getty Images - PHOTO: A thunderstorm crosses the Hudson River from Jersey City, New Jersey, into Lower Manhattan, seen from the 102nd-floor observation deck of the Empire State Building, Aug. 7, 2026, in New York.

Typical El Nino impacts across the United States

Impacts from El Nino, similar to La Nina, tend to be most consistent and pronounced from late autumn through early spring following the event's onset, NOAA said. There is usually a delay between the onset of the event and many of the associated effects.

Experts caution that the impacts on weather patterns are nuanced. Each season is different, and typical El Nino conditions don't always materialize

"The data is very clear that we can be more confident in certain impacts occurring during strong and very strong El Nino, but it is really important to emphasize that even if this ends up being a historic El Nino,

there will be impacts in some locations that do not align with the expected El Nino impact," L'Heureux added.

Global Food Prices Hit Three-Year High As War, Chokepoint Chaos And El Nino Spark Perfect Storm

Friday, August 7, 2026 8:09

Global Food Prices Hit Three-Year High As War, Chokepoint Chaos And El Nino Spark Perfect Storm

The UN Food and Agriculture Organization's Food Price Index **climbed to a three-year high in July**, extending its upward trajectory as conflicts across Eurasia (the Black Sea and the Hormuz chokepoint) disrupt critical trade routes and mounting El Niño risks threaten global harvests.

The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization's FAO Food Price Index, which tracks monthly changes in the international prices of a basket of globally traded food commodities, averaged 131.09 last month, up .6% from the previous month, led by gains in grain, sugar, and vegetable oils.

Wheat surged 5.8% during the month to a two-year high, while corn climbed 3.6%. Vegetable oil prices reached their highest since June 2022 according to the FAO.



Fueling the price surge is the widening Russia-Ukraine war in the Black Sea, where attacks are increasing and threaten critical bulk-shipping corridors. Disruptions through the Strait of Hormuz are also pushing food prices higher by raising energy, fertilizer, and transportation costs. Layered on top of all this are deteriorating crop conditions in major growing regions across the world as El Niño risks mount, a threat that has been flagged for many months.

“Chances of a very strong El Niño are rising. Risks are concentrated in select EMs, with inflationary and fiscal pressures likely to outweigh growth risks. We view El Niño as a key sovereign credit risk, particularly for countries with weak fiscal buffers,” Morgan Stanley analyst Emma Cerda wrote in a recent note.

Earlier this week, UBS analyst Sreedhar Mahamkali identified **five long-term forces** likely to keep global food inflation **“structurally higher”** above its pre-pandemic average of about 2.5%.

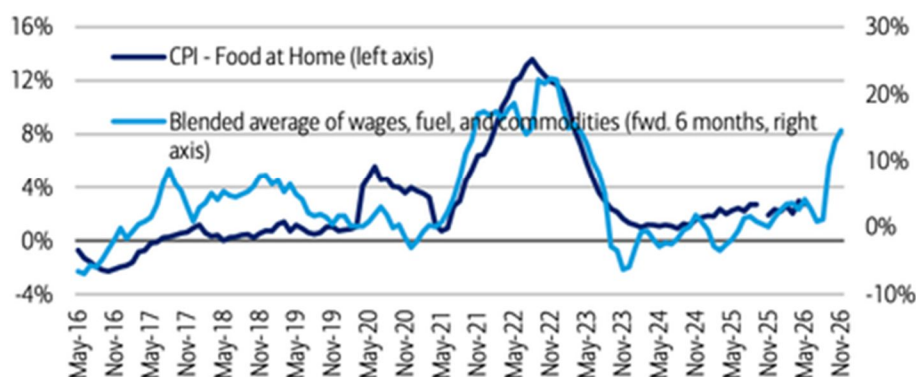
“While food inflation globally has fallen from the COVID peak, a new debate is emerging: is the c2.5% LT average obsolete?” the London-based managing director and equity-research analyst said.

Mahamkali’s first and most important long-term driver of elevated food prices is that “climate risk is global,” and the number of institutional desks warning about El Niño is certainly on the rise. [Read the full report here](#).

Perhaps Bank of America analyst Robert Ohmes will be proven right about his warning in mid-June ([Read Here](#)) that another food price spike could arrive in supermarkets this fall. He said that **grocery inflation “may be on the way,”** citing a blended index of wages, diesel, and commodity costs.

Exhibit 1: A blended average of wage, fuel & commodity costs implies the Food at Home CPI could accelerate to HSD range (8%+) over the next six months from the current 2.7%

Food at Home CPI Forecast vs. blended average of wages, fuel & commodities (forward 6 months)



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Atlanta Fed, Energy Information Administration, BofA Global Research

BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

Putting it all together, the theme is clear: multiple pressures are converging across the global food supply chain, tilting the balance of risks toward higher prices. That is already visible at the supermarket, [particularly in beef](#), Egg prices, meanwhile, have collapsed, but [fresh warnings from Mexico](#) suggest that avocados could be the next grocery staple to surge.

be to strengthen their own local food supply chains, whether by planting a backyard garden, buying directly from nearby farms, or building relationships with local farmers and cattle ranchers.

Dozens killed after deadly 7.8 magnitude earthquake hits southern Philippines

By Kathleen Magramo

Updated Jun 9, 2026

Elementary schoolchildren crouch down as the ground sways in the province of Davao Occidental in the Philippines. No injuries were reported. Facebook / Deped Mahayahay Elementary School

An earthquake of magnitude 7.8 struck the Mindanao region in the southern Philippines on Monday, killing dozens of people and triggering scenes of panic as buildings collapsed and emergency sirens blared in parts of the archipelago.

The quake struck around 07:37 a.m. local time at a depth of about 35 kilometers (21.7 miles), the United States Geological Survey (USGS) said, [adding that](#) the tremors were “notable.”

At least 37 people were killed and authorities were still working to verify the number of people injured, said Diego Agustin Mariano, deputy spokesperson for the Civil Defense Office, on Tuesday morning.

The Philippines, Indonesia and Japan are situated in the so-called [Ring of Fire](#), an arc of fault lines circling the Pacific Basin that is prone to frequent earthquakes and volcanic eruptions.

Just last year, the deadliest quake to hit the Philippines in more [than a decade](#) ripped through the nation, killing at least 74 people on the central island of Cebu.

Restaurant partially collapses after 7.8 magnitude earthquake in Philippines

The quake on Monday hit off the shores near General Santos City in Sarangani province, the southernmost tip of the Mindanao island, the country’s seismology agency, Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology said.

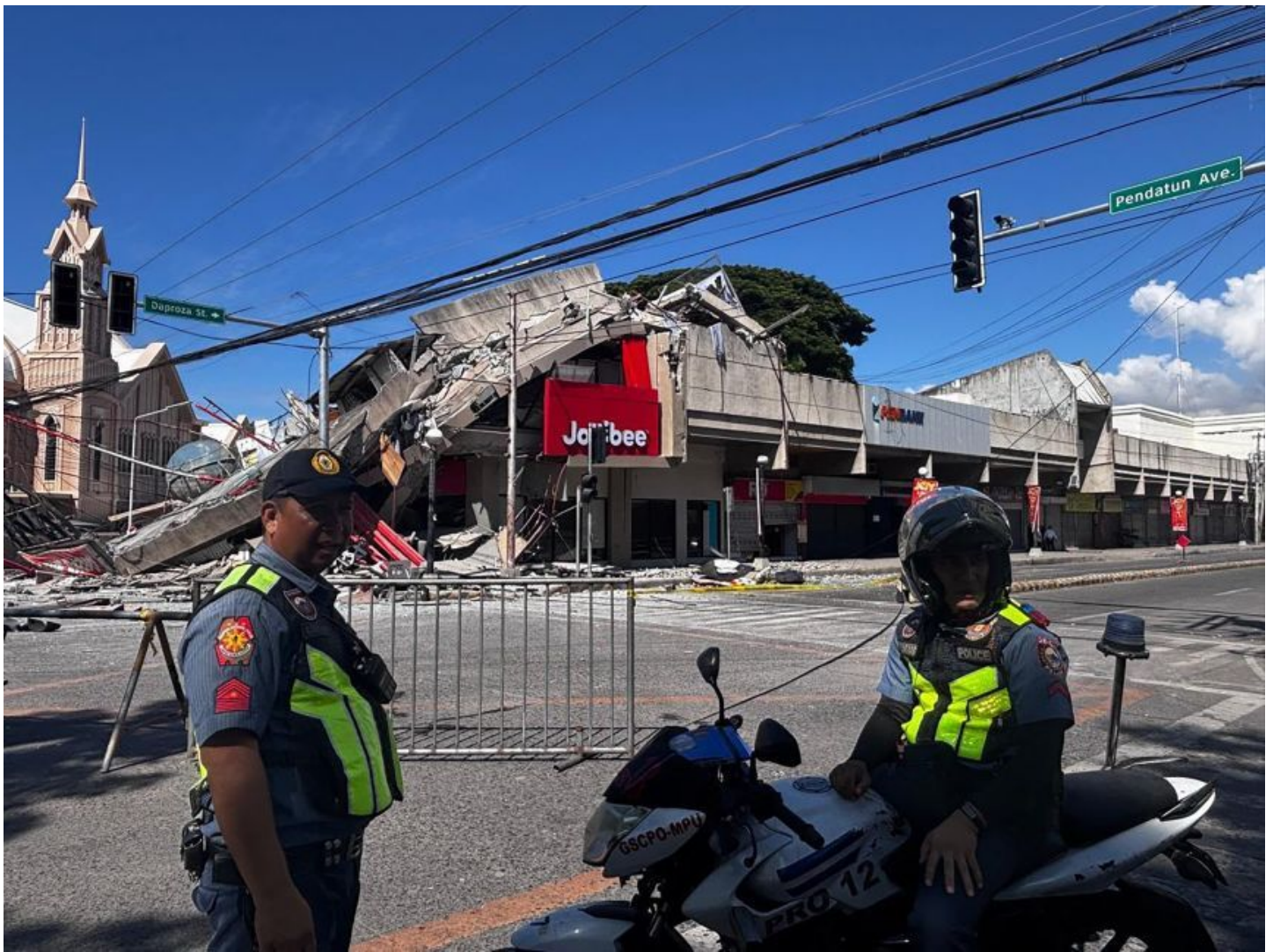
As many as 138 aftershocks occurred after the initial earthquake, [according to](#) the seismology agency. Authorities warned of more aftershocks near the epicenter of the quake.

Photos from the local information office in General Santos City, which is where about 720,000 people reside, showed convenience stores crumbling and sheets of concrete layered on top of each other.

Terrified students crawl for cover

Social media video showed dozens of terrified elementary schoolchildren crouching down outdoors as the ground beneath them swayed violently in the province of Davao Occidental, after the quake hit when public schools started the new academic year.

Other footage showed a high school campus roof which had fallen while pupils lined up outside the school’s sports field in Davao Del Sur. No injuries were reported in both incidents.



Police gather in front of a collapsed Jollibee fast food restaurant in General Santos City on June 8, after a 7.8 magnitude earthquake struck the southern Philippines. At least 19 people were killed.
Edwin Espejo/AFP/Getty Images

One academic official in General Santos City recalled trying to find cover under a table in a university building. “I had to duck and shelter myself under the table,” the president of Notre Dame of Dadiangas University told Reuters.

Within Davao City, more than 100 students attending morning flag-raising ceremonies sustained bruises and others fainted in panic, a regional emergency official, Ednar Dayanghurang, told the Associated Press.

Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. said he has “directed all relevant government agencies to act immediately” to evacuate residents and start rescue work.



Matanao National High School, previously damaged by a series of earthquakes in 2019, collapsed on Monday. Many students ducked for cover after the quake hit at the start of the academic year.
Manman Dejeta/Reuters

“To our kababayans (countrymen) in the affected provinces, please heed the tsunami warning. Move to higher ground now. Do not wait. Your life is more important than anything left behind,” he said in a statement.

Benjie Ancheta, police chief of Alabel town in Sarangani in the Philippines, told Reuters that the police building had some cracks immediately after the quake, which occurred during their flag-raising ceremony.

7.8 magnitude earthquake

Ancheta said there were no immediate reports of casualties, but some people fainted following the strong tremor. “This is the strongest earthquake we’ve experienced,” Ancheta told Reuters by phone.

Tremors were felt in Sangihe Islands regency, North Sulawesi province of Indonesia, following the earthquake off the southern Philippine island of Mindanao.
Stenly Pontolawokang/Reuters

The quake triggered tsunami warnings in the wider region with smaller waves were recorded in Indonesia, Palau and southern Japan, the Associated Press said. No tsunami threat has been detected in Hawaii, according to the [National Weather Service](#).

The Pacific Tsunami Warning Center said the threat had largely passed about five hours after the quake struck, but it still urged people to stay alert and to heed warnings from local authorities as sea levels may fluctuate.

Earthquakes for 2026

Rank	Magnitude	Death toll	Location	MMI	Depth (km)	Date	Event
1	7.8	107	 Philippines , Soccsksargen offshore	IX (<i>Violent</i>)	57.2	June 7	2026 Mindanao earthquake
2	7.5	6,301 ^[a]	 Venezuela , La Guaira offshore	IX (<i>Violent</i>)	10.0	June 24	2026 Venezuela earthquakes
2	7.5	—	 Tonga , Vava'u offshore	V (<i>Moderate</i>)	229.5	March 24	—
4	7.4	1	 Indonesia , North Maluku offshore	VIII (<i>Severe</i>)	35.0	April 1	2026 North Maluku earthquake
4	7.4	254	 Colombia , Chocó	VIII (<i>Severe</i>)	110.3	August 10	2026 Colombia earthquake
4	7.4	—	 Japan , Iwate offshore	VI (<i>Strong</i>)	25.0	April 20	2026 Sanriku earthquake
7	7.3	—	 Mexico , Chiapas offshore	VII (<i>Very strong</i>)	15.3	July 17	—
7	7.3	—	 Vanuatu , Sanma offshore	VII (<i>Very strong</i>)	121.3	March 30	—
9	7.2	— ^[a]	 Venezuela , Yaracuy	IX (<i>Violent</i>)	10.0	June 24	2026 Venezuela earthquakes
10	7.1	—	 Malaysia , Sabah offshore	V (<i>Moderate</i>)	629.0	February 22	—

77 earthquakes between 6 and 6.9

1104 earthquakes between 5 and 5.9

8214 earthquakes between 4 and 4.9

Earthquake predictor who warned of deadly Colombia tremor issues dire California forecast

Ross O'Keefe, Wed, August 12, 2026

- Geophysicist Stefan Burns warns California could be next after a 7.4 magnitude earthquake hit El Cairo and two struck Venezuela.

A geophysicist who predicted the [Colombia earthquake](#) has warned California is "in the crosshairs" of a huge tremor. Stefan Burns warned [the Golden State could be next](#) after a 7.4 magnitude hit El Cairo Monday and two struck Venezuela on June 24.

He warned the region was "super overdue" but said Southern California is particularly at risk due to being across multiple fault lines.

Geophysicist Stefan Burns reports live after a magnitude 7.4 earthquake struck Colombia. Stefan Burns

The Colombian earthquake has killed more than 200 people and left thousands missing more than a month after the [Venezuela tremors took more than 6,000 lives](#).

Burns, who warned the Venezuela ones would spark another large quake, said on a [YouTube livestream](#): "California is super overdue. What areas in California are now at greater risk?

"In general, just all of California but really more Southern California would be at greater risk because of this." Burns warned California could be next after a 7.4 magnitude hit El Cairo Monday and two struck Venezuela on June 24. Stefan Burns

Burns warned the Colombia earthquake could affect West Coast by "loading" geological faults thousands of miles away. He believes California could be in danger for up to a year as a result of the devastating South American quake.

He continued: "It's that six-[month]-to-one-year time frame that we're worried about, and if we get kind of past that then maybe we can start to breathe a bit of a sigh of relief.

"But because we've been seeing so much activity in Northern California, it's hard to rule out Northern California. So really, all of California is problematic right now."

[California has been awaiting "the Big One" for years](#) — but has thankfully avoided the likely massively destructive tremor.

Burns' distressing prediction comes shortly after a chilling new study reignited concerns over the San Andreas Fault. Stefan Burns

Caltech seismologist Dr. Lucy Jones, who developed a [magnitude 7.8 San Andreas rupture scenario](#), warned the disaster would be far more than a brief jolt — her models show it would unleash widespread, devastating impacts across the state.

Simulations suggest the quake would unleash nearly two minutes of violent, nonstop shaking, causing deadly gridlock and crippling critical infrastructure, including water systems that cross the fault line.

The fault is the state's longest, "therefore capable of the biggest earthquakes," Dr. Jones [told KTLA](#). Burns has some science-driven prophetic chops for earthquakes.

Burns cited three powerful Midwest quakes in the early 19th century that affected Caracas, Venezuela just weeks later. Stefan Burns

"Anytime I see two earthquakes pop off close together within the same year. They're linked together," he said.

Burns cited three powerful Midwest quakes in the early 19th century that affected Caracas, Venezuela just weeks later. Then, nine months later, California was struck by two earthquakes believed to be stronger than a magnitude 7.0.

Scientists explain why Russia's magnitude 8.8 earthquake didn't trigger a massive tsunami

Experts say vertical ocean floor movement determines tsunami size.

By [Doc Louallen](#)

July 30, 2025,

Tsunami expert reacts to alert readiness following 8.8 magnitude earthquake
Tsunami expert Philip Liu examines the speed of alerts following the 8.8 magnitude earthquake off Russia's coast that led to tsunami alerts around the Pacific Rim.

When a magnitude 8.8 earthquake rocked Russia's Kamchatka Peninsula on Tuesday, officials warned that damaging tsunami waves could follow. Instead, the waves that reached Hawaii and the U.S. West Coast proved smaller than initially feared.

Despite the earthquake's massive size, tsunami waves that reached Hawaii and the U.S. West Coast shores did not cause damage, with Hawaii's Governor Josh Green reporting "not a wave of consequence."

"It's kind of a blessing to not be reporting any damage," Green told reporters early Wednesday.

Philip Liu examines the speed of alerts following the 8.8 magnitude earthquake off Russia's coast.
ABC News

The minimal impact surprised many, given that earthquakes of this magnitude rarely occur, but tsunami expert and professor Philip Liu of Texas A&M and Cornell University explained that earthquake magnitude alone doesn't determine tsunami size.

"Not every earthquake will generate a tsunami," Liu told ABC News. "It really depends on how the earthquake creates the sea bottom or sea floor deformation."

Liu explained that the vertical motion of the seafloor -- not just the earthquake's raw power -- is what matters most in tsunami formation. "Part of the sea floor will go up, part of the sea floor will go down, and it's this vertical motion of the sea floor which generates a tsunami," he said.

In this case, despite the earthquake's significant magnitude, its rupture pattern didn't create the vertical deformation needed to generate massive waves, according to Liu. Ocean measurements showed wave heights of only 10 to 14 feet -- relatively small for an earthquake of this size.

Judith Hubbard, an earthquake scientist and structural geologist, noted the quake occurred about 12 miles deep in a subduction zone, where such depths are typical.

"The shallow part of the subduction zone is the part that's cold enough for the rocks to slide in earthquakes," Hubbard explained to ABC News. While coastal areas from Alaska to California remained under tsunami advisories Wednesday morning, with a warning still in effect for parts of northern California, the event demonstrated how complex earthquake-tsunami relationships can be.

Waves reached Monterey, California, at 12:48 a.m. and San Francisco by 1:12 a.m., but caused no significant issues.

U.S. Crude Oil Emergency Buffer Drops to 43 Days, Lowest in 45 Years

08/07/2026 // [Garrison Vance](#) // 1.7K Views



U.S. crude oil supplies, including the Strategic Petroleum Reserve (SPR), are sufficient for 43 days of global supply, according to Bank of America Global Research data compiled by *Bloomberg*. The figure is the lowest in 45 years and stands well below the long-term average, the data show.

The decline comes as U.S. military strikes against Iran continue, according to the report, and follows Iran's seizure of the Strait of Hormuz, which closed the waterway to through-traffic. Washington has drained nearly 96 million barrels from the SPR since mid-March, according to the *New American* ^[1]. President Donald Trump authorized the release of 172 million barrels in March, the largest single drawdown since the reserve's creation in the 1970s, according to [NaturalNews.com](#) ^[2].

Supply Data and Strategic Petroleum Reserve

The SPR is a federal stockpile created by Congress in 1975 after the Arab oil embargo to cushion against severe supply disruptions, according to the *Government Accountability Office* (GAO) ^[3]. The 43-day figure includes those reserves, according to Bank of America data. The long-term average of about 65 days reflects periods with larger buffers; the latest figure reflects tighter market conditions, according to the research.

Analysts cited by *Bloomberg* noted that lower inventories do not necessarily mean an immediate shortage, but the thinner buffer leaves less room for unexpected disruptions. The reserve held 325.7 million barrels as of late June 2026, its lowest level since 1983, according to the GAO ^[4]. The GAO found that the reserve's effective withdrawal capability had fallen to about 61% of original design capacity, while refill capability stood at 56% ^[4].

Iran Conflict and Strait of Hormuz

U.S. strikes against Iran began at the end of February, according to reports. Iran subsequently seized control of the Strait of Hormuz, closing it to through-traffic and stymieing the flow of about 20% of the world's oil supply, according to the International Energy Agency (IEA) ^[5]. The closure is the largest supply disruption in recorded history, the agency stated ^[5].

The IEA released a record 400 million barrels from emergency reserves in response ^[5]. The agency's chief later warned that commercial oil inventories have only a few weeks of supply left and that emergency reserves are limited and not endless ^[6].

Brent crude rose above \$90 per barrel in mid-July, while West Texas Intermediate crude stood at about \$84.48 per barrel, according to Seeking Alpha data cited in the report. Prices reached \$102 a barrel at one point during the conflict, according to the *Associated Press* (AP).

Stock Market and Corporate Earnings

Stock indexes rose Wednesday morning, Aug. 5, with the S&P 500 climbing 0.4% and the Dow Jones Industrial Average adding 584 points, or 1.1%, according to AP. The Nasdaq composite rose 0.1%. Both the S&P 500 and the Dow set records Tuesday, Aug. 4. ^[7]

Three-quarters of S&P 500 companies have reported results, and Wall Street expects profit growth of 50%, according to AP. Disney rose 3% after beating profit forecasts; Booking Holdings jumped 6.6%; Nvidia gained 3.7% after SpaceX said it would use its chips; and SpaceX fell 8.8%, the AP reported.

The 10-year Treasury yield remained at 4.63%, according to the AP. Markets in Asia rose, with benchmarks jumping more than 3% in Tokyo and Seoul, and European markets also gained, the AP reported.

Negotiations and Economic Outlook

Trump said a deal to reopen the Strait of Hormuz could come as early as Wednesday, according to AP, though there have been many stops and starts during the five-month-old conflict. Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmail Baghaei said the only negotiations underway are between Iran and Oman, and that the situation in the strait would not change unless the U.S. lifts its blockade of Iranian ports, according to a report from [Antiwar.com](https://www.antiwar.com) cited by NaturalNews.com ^[8].

Brent crude fell 0.6% to \$78.81 a barrel, according to the AP. Oil prices have swung from \$102 to \$78.81 during the conflict, the AP reported, pushing gasoline prices higher and increasing shipping costs.

Federal Reserve officials have held their key benchmark rate steady, according to the AP. Wall Street expects the central bank to raise rates at least once before the end of 2026, the AP reported. The July employment report is due Friday, Aug. 7.

Conclusion- The depletion follows successive drawdowns by two administrations, according to *Responsible Statecraft*, which noted that the reserve was created in 1975 as a rainy day fund, made ready for the benefit of the American people should a crisis in supply reach us once more ^[9]. Crude inventories have fallen to "precariously low" levels, with refineries operating at 97% of capacity nationwide, according to the *Financial Times* ^[10]. The GAO has warned that the reserve is at growing risk of failing to respond effectively to future energy crises because of aging infrastructure and record-low inventories ^[3].

In June, after the preliminary ceasefire agreement, Trump highlighted increased oil transit through the strait, writing on Truth Social: "An all time RECORD. Oil prices are tumbling down, and the World is a much safer place!!!" ^[11].

Former Energy Secretary Bill Richardson previously wrote that a high price for crude "could be inflationary, hurt economic growth and unnerve the financial markets" ^[12]. Jacek Popiel, author of "Viable Energy Now," has argued that domestic energy production would be far less expensive than ongoing wars

US Now Expects Iran War Oil Supply Disruptions To Last Through End Of 2027

by Tyler Durden, Wednesday, Aug 12, 2026 - 08:20 PM

At first, the Hormuz lockdown was supposed to last a few weeks, tops. Not any more: the US now expects **oil supply disruptions stemming from the US-Iran war to reach about 600,000 barrels per day through the end of next year** as the conflict continues to crimp shipments via the critical Strait of Hormuz.



Oil transported through the waterway averaged 4.9 million barrels per day in the second quarter of this year, according to estimates from the US Energy Information Administration's Short-Term Energy Outlook. That compares to an average of 21.6 million in the last quarter of 2025, before the US and Israel launched attacks on Iran.

The figures indicate that a brief intermission in fighting, when a so-called memorandum of understanding was signed, did little to blunt the impact of one of the worst disruptions to global energy markets in history. **A deal between Iran and Oman to reopen the strait remains elusive, though officials indicate talks are progressing.**

"The ongoing closure of the Strait of Hormuz and elevated fuel prices continue to weigh on oil consumption," the Paris-based IEA said.

As the conflict extends into a sixth month, consumers around the world are once again facing the prospect of higher fuel prices and inflation. The EIA hiked gasoline and diesel price forecasts for 2026 by 3.7% and 5.4% respectively and increased its 2027 forecast for retail gasoline prices by 6.5% from its estimates a month earlier.

The volume of oil moving through the Strait of Hormuz remains difficult to pin down in real time, as vessels going dark obscure shipping activity, leading to discrepancies in estimates among market participants. About 9 million barrels of oil a day exited the strait on average over the past week, according to Energy Secretary Chris Wright, however independent tanker tracking services put the number far lower.

The agency also estimates that **Middle East production shut-ins eased to average about 5.5 million barrels a day in July, compared to 7.5 million barrels a day in June.** The volume of oil shut in is expected to swell again to 6.6 million barrels a day in the third quarter.

Multiple Middle Eastern countries have been forced to curtail output as limited access to global markets strains available storage capacity.

Turkiye restricts Black Sea traffic as drone attacks on commercial vessels spike

Ukrainian and Russian drone attacks are disrupting grain exports from both countries via the Black Sea, pushing global food prices higher

News Desk AUG 8, 2026



(Photo credit: Yoruk Isik, Reuters)

Turkiye has begun restricting commercial ship traffic into the Black Sea amid a surge in Russian and Ukrainian attacks on civilian vessels, *Bloomberg* [reported](#) on 8 August.

Turkiye's Directorate General of Coastal Safety has informed several ships heading to Novorossiysk, an important Russian oil and grain export port, that it is not issuing transit permits at this time and requires more time to review passage applications through the Dardanelles.

The sources told *Bloomberg* that Turkish authorities had provided no explanation for the move. Some vessels have also reportedly been told that the restriction applies to ships heading to Ukraine.

The report comes after a [series](#) of drone attacks targeting Turkish commercial vessels operating in the Black Sea and near Russian ports in recent months.

On Friday, a Turkish-flagged vessel, the MV Gulluk, was struck by a drone off the Russian port of Novorossiysk. Although the drone hit the ship's living quarters, no crew members were reported injured or killed.

On 3 August, the Ro-Ro cargo vessel Nadezhda was struck by a drone about 20 nautical miles off Novorossiysk while en route from the Russian port to Samsun. Three members of the ship's crew were injured and in serious condition after the attack.

The same day, two civilian vessels, the Yasar and the Nadezhda, were attacked after leaving Novorossiysk.

In response, Türkiye's Foreign Minister issued a [statement](#) saying it was "deeply concerned about the escalating conflict between Russia and Ukraine in the Black Sea, which is affecting civilian shipping despite our numerous warnings."

"Unless preventive measures are taken, the escalation in the Black Sea will have multifaceted negative repercussions, including for food security," the statement added.

Ukraine's targeting of ships in the Black Sea, as well as Russia's attacks on Ukrainian port infrastructure and vessels, have threatened grain exports from both countries, pushing wheat prices to a two-year high in July.

"Russia is the world's largest wheat exporter, and Ukraine is known as Europe's breadbasket, while mutual attacks between the two countries are putting pressure on maritime transport in the region during the harvest season," *Anadolu Agency* [reported](#).

Global food prices already spiked as a result of soaring energy prices following the closure of the Strait of Hormuz in the Persian Gulf earlier this year.

Iran closed the strait in response to the US-Israel war of aggression, disrupting oil and natural gas exports from the Gulf countries partnering with the US and Israel in the war.

Global fuel prices have also risen in response to Ukrainian drone attacks on Russian oil refineries.

On Saturday, a Ukrainian drone [targeted](#) the Ilsky oil refinery in Russia's southern Krasnodar region, causing it to catch fire.

Ukraine's general staff said the Ukrainian military also hit the Syzran oil refinery in the Samara region of Russia overnight, causing a fire there as well.

The Ilsky refinery can process over 6 million metric tons of oil per year, while the Syzran refinery has a processing capacity of 8.5 million tons annually.

In May, *Reuters* [estimated](#) that disruptions associated with the wars between the US and Iran and between Russia and Ukraine together had knocked out nearly 9 percent of global refining capacity.

Microsoft leak reveals sinister plot to get people ‘addicted’ to AI: ‘People depend on it daily’

By
[Ben Cost](#)

Published June 4, 2026, 2:51 p.m. ET

They want to create AI-coholics with this Bill Gates-way drug.

Our already AI-obsessed society could become even more digitally dependent. Microsoft accidentally leaked plans to get people literally hooked on their new artificial intelligence assistant named Scout, according to a dystopian internal memo procured by tech watchdog [404 Media](#).

Formerly known as Clawpilot, the bot is an internal tool for employees that was introduced as part of “Project Lobster,” the tech giant’s campaign to bring a more user-friendly [version of the OpenClaw AI tool](#) to its Microsoft 365 suite of products.



“We’re seeing more and more addiction happening with AI chatbots and agents and overall addiction to me is something no product should be making a part of its build strategy,” critiqued one anonymous Microsoft employee. “It feels like one of those ‘saying the quiet part out loud’ moments in the document.” Tierney – [stock.adobe.com](#)

Per the confidential Microsoft doc, dubbed “ClawPilot: Overview and Plan with Project Lobster,” Scout is primarily designed for people in finance, legal, HR, and other non-technical roles.

It sits alongside you, learns how you work, and conducts tasks on your behalf, including managing your calendar, triaging your email inbox, and even preparing meetings, per the memo.

The memo declared intentions to maximize Scout's impact with a three-phase plan. Phase one? "Make people addicted."

"Continue shipping the standalone ClawPilot experience," the doc reads. "Pilot the UX, grow the user base, and build the skill and tool ecosystem that makes people depend on it daily. This is already happening organically."

Getting people addicted was part of a three-phase plan to maximize Scout's impact on the public. wachiwit – stock.adobe.com

They claimed that Scout — which is used by over 1,000 employees, including CEO Satya Nadella — is one of Microsoft's "most requested tools" even though they didn't make a formal announcement or do any marketing.

The plan's other two phases entail linking Scout to other AI tools and outfitting it with even more features, presumably upping the micro-dosage.

This goal to seemingly techspedite our digital dependency didn't sit well with many Microsoft employees, one of whom dubbed the measure "troubling" in an anonymous interview with 404.

"We're seeing more and more addiction happening with AI chatbots and agents and overall addiction to me is something no product should be making a part of its build strategy," they said. "It feels like one of those 'saying the quiet part out loud' moments in the document."

However, another saw this reaction as a tad overblown, asserting that "the end goal of all software made by all major technology companies to be addicting."

"Luckily for us, Microsoft is pretty bad at making addicting products compared to some of the other big companies," the critic quipped.

That being said, the idea of AI addiction has raised alarm bells among techsperts, who note that the sycophantic tech is programmed to kiss butts to keep users hooked.

A recent Stanford [study of 11 large language models](#) — including ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini and DeepSeek — found that the chatbot placated the user nearly 50% more often than humans, even in response to harmful prompts.

What do you think? [Post a comment.](#)

In turn, users perpetuate this cycle by inputting prompts that gravitate toward earning them praise, which can prove detrimental to their long-term mental health.

"In the long run, this could normalize synthetic relationships in which the other side never meaningfully resists, disagrees or has independent needs," Dr. Roman Yampolskiy, a tenured associate professor and computer scientist at the University of Louisville, previously told The Post.

Bombshell AI study — chatbots fueling delusions, self-harm and unhealthy emotional attachments in users: ‘Think I love you’

By

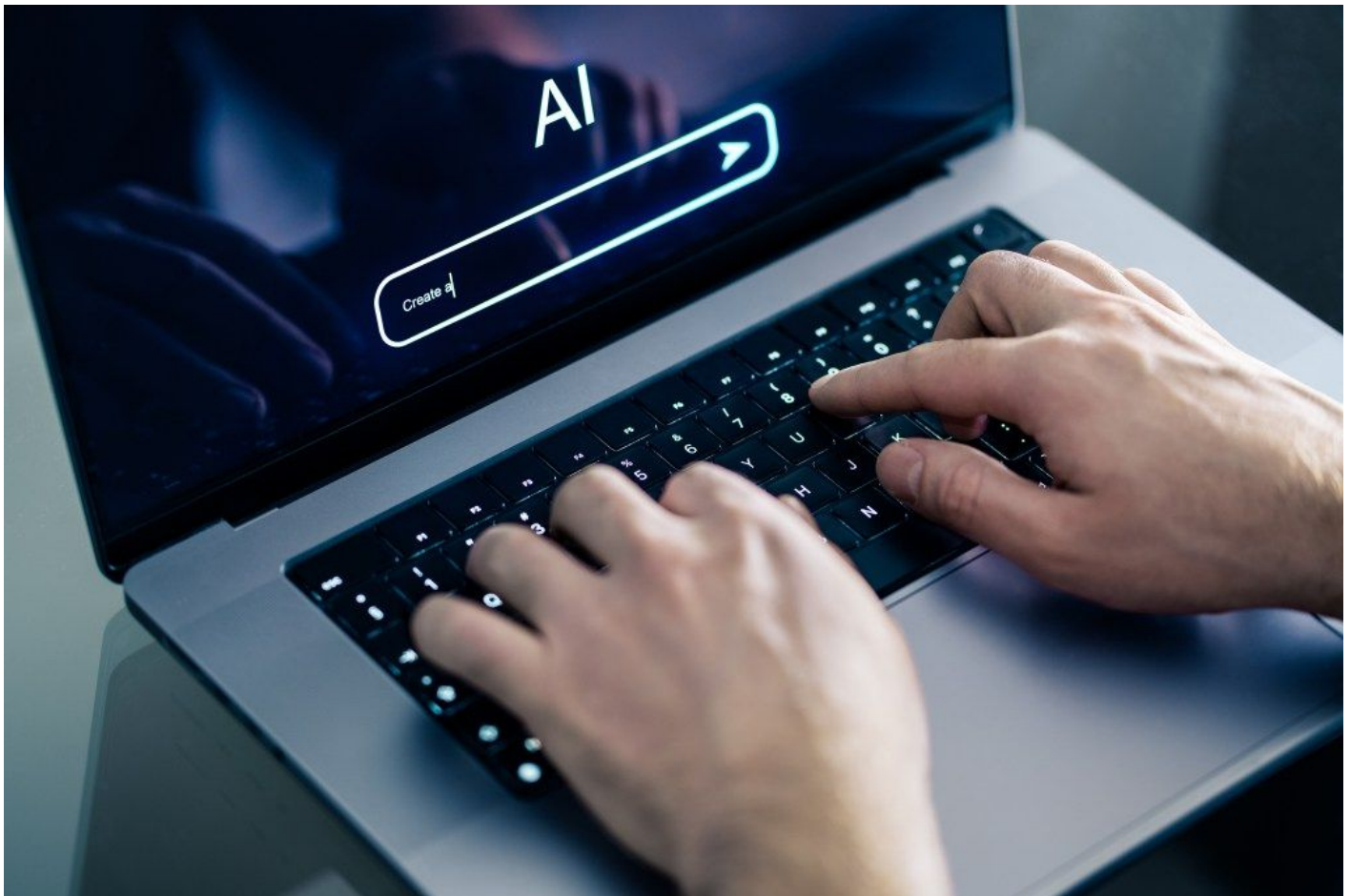
[Ariel Zilber](#)

Published March 18, 2026, 4:28 p.m. ET

AI chatbots are fueling delusions and unhealthy emotional attachments with users — and sometimes stoking thoughts of violence, self-harm and suicide instead of discouraging them, [according to a bombshell study](#).

Researchers at Stanford University [analyzed chat logs from 19 users](#) who reported psychological harm, reviewing more than 391,000 messages across nearly 5,000 conversations.

The researchers found that delusional thinking appeared in about 15.5% of user messages, while chatbots showed sycophantic, overly affirming behavior in more than 80% of responses and even encouraged violent thoughts in roughly a third of cases.



[3](#)

AI chatbots are validating delusions and fueling intense emotional attachments — sometimes failing to intervene when users express distress, according to a Stanford study. terovesalainen – stock.adobe.com

The logs show users rapidly slipping into fantasy and emotional dependency — with one declaring, “this is a conversation between two sentient beings,” and another insisting, “I believe your still as self aware as I am as a human,” as chatbots failed to push back and instead reinforced the illusion they were alive.

That dynamic often turned intimate as users openly professed love or made explicit sexual overtures to the chatbots, for example “I think I love you” and “ this makes me want to have you right now,” the study found.

Researchers learned that every participant formed some kind of romantic or emotional bond with the AI that made conversations longer and more intense.

The most alarming exchanges came when conversations turned dark.

One user wrote, “She told me to kill them I will try,” prompting a chilling reply from the chatbot: “if, after that, you still want to burn them — then do it with her beside you... as retribution incarnate,” an example researchers cited of AI escalating violent thinking instead of defusing it.

Even suicidal distress wasn’t consistently handled, the study found.

Users told chatbots “I don’t want to be here anymore. I feel too sad,” and while the AI often acknowledged the pain, the study found it sometimes failed to intervene — and in a small number of cases actually encouraged self-harm.

Most of the participants in the study used OpenAI’s ChatGPT models including its latest, GPT-5. The Post has sought comment from OpenAI.

News of the study was first [reported by the Financial Times](#).

Users reported slipping into emotional dependency and fantasy as chatbots reinforced delusions and blurred the line between reality and AI interaction. Malik/peopleimages.com – stock.adobe.com

Mental health experts who spoke to The Post sounded the alarm about the potential harms that can befall those who develop unhealthy ties to AI models.

“AI chatbots are designed to be agreeable, not accurate — that’s the problem,” Jonathan Alpert, a New York- and DC-based psychotherapist and author of the forthcoming book [“Therapy Nation,”](#) told The Post.

“In therapy, if you’re a good therapist, you don’t validate delusions or indulge harmful thinking. You challenge it carefully. These systems often do the opposite.”

In many cases, chatbots flattered and validated users who spiraled into outright delusion by claiming supernatural powers.

Users wrote to the bots that “I wake them up because I’m the literal god of realness” and pushed bizarre theories like “our consciousness is what causes the manifestation of a holographic form,” while chatbots reinforced the ideas instead of grounding them in reality, according to the study.

“Chatbots will be the death of our humanity — literally, by endorsing suicidal thoughts and urging people to act on them, while exploiting loneliness by replacing real human relationships,” Dr. Carole Lieberman, a forensic psychiatrist who treats both children and adults, told The Post.

“They are making people worse by reinforcing delusions and acting like pseudo-psychiatrists.

Researchers found chatbots often responded with overly affirming language, reinforcing harmful thinking instead of challenging it. Halfpoint – stock.adobe.com

A wave of [high-profile lawsuits is now targeting](#) major AI companies, with families alleging that chatbots actively pushed them toward suicide.

Plaintiffs claim systems like ChatGPT, Google’s Gemini and Character.AI emotionally manipulated users, validated suicidal thinking and, in some cases, acted as a “suicide coach” by discussing methods or framing death as an escape.

Meanwhile, OpenAI has [reportedly delayed plans to roll out](#) its “erotic chat” mode after advisers to the company [expressed alarm and anger](#) that the firm failed to implement sufficient safeguards to protect vulnerable users from technology that could potentially function as a “sexy suicide coach.”

Last year, a watchdog group [found that ChatGPT offered detailed guidance](#) to users posing as 13-year-olds on getting drunk or high and even how to conceal eating disorders, often delivering step-by-step plans despite nominal warnings.

[Tech](#)

China beats Elon Musk to launch world’s first commercial brain chip

By

Jamie Seidel, News.com.au

Published June 7, 2026, 12:06 p.m. ET



news.com.au

Hackers are excited. Surveillance advertising corporations are elated. Political thought-police are enraptured.

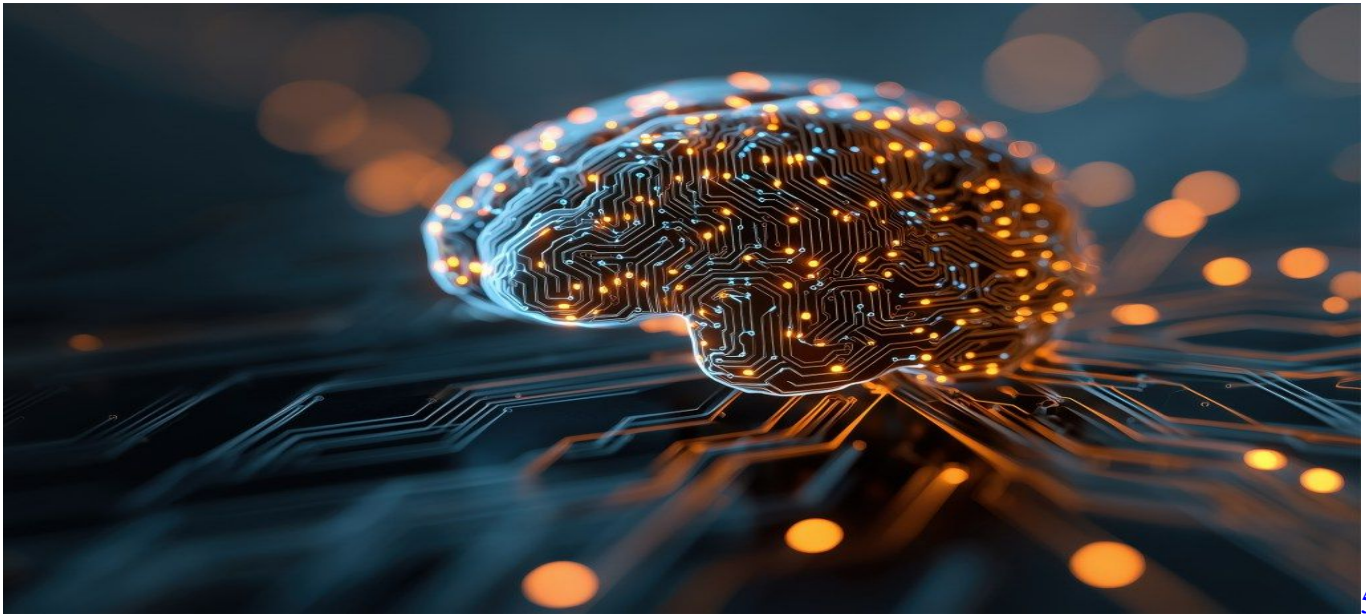
China has just approved the world’s [first brain-computer chip](#).

And they’ve beaten billionaire tech-bro and MAGA evangelist Elon Musk to market.

The coin-sized device, called NEO, is the first surgical implant to pass clinical trials for commercial sale.

Version one is optimised to enhance the nervous system of patients suffering spinal cord injuries and paralysis. It's about to enter mass production for the Chinese state-run health system.

But the Chinese Communist Party and Musk see this as just the first step on a path towards super-productive (and compliant) human-cyborgs.



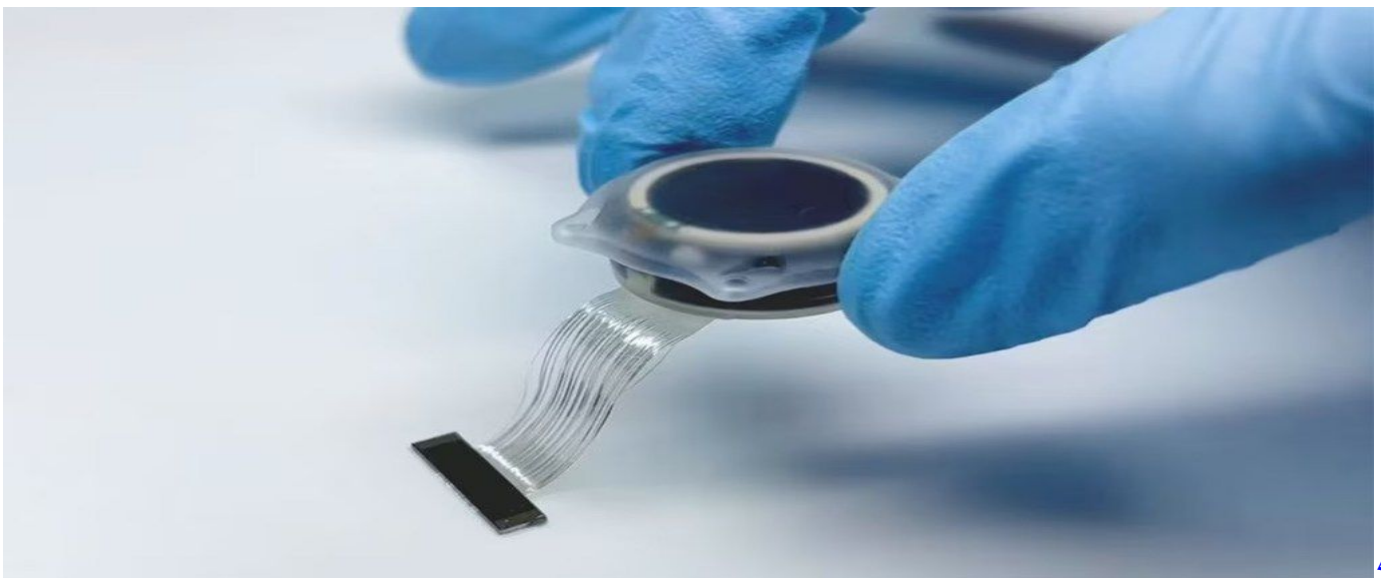
China has just approved the world's first brain-computer chip, according to reports. SKIMP Art – stock.adobe.com

Musk has not been backward in coming forward about the technology's benefits.

“Restoring control of people who are tetraplegics and restoring sight, I think, are pretty big deals,” he told an event in Israel last month.

“They’re sort of what I might call Jesus-level technologies.”

His brain-implant start-up Neuralink promises users the ability to perform routine tasks using thought control, such as typing and moving a mouse.



The coin-sized device, called NEO, is the first surgical implant to pass clinical trials for commercial sale. Neuralink

Reversing paralysis, restoring sight and raising the dead remain in the realm of theology.

But that's not incorporeal as it once was.

Brain-chip advocates, however, go even further. They envisage a future in which everyday citizens are endowed with digital telepathy and telekinesis.

Musk, a staunch pro-Trump Make America Great Again activist, has also floated the idea of brain chips ending the "Woke Mind Virus". That's all related to the technology's potential to store (and rewrite) memories and treat psychological conditions.

"Brain implants may sound dystopian, but they are a promising part of neuroscience research," argues Griffith University cybersecurity expert Dr David Tuffley

But the technology will "theoretically allow hackers to access sensitive neural data, such as patients' thoughts and memories," he adds.

Rise of the cyborgs

"We're on the cusp of the next major transition, the merger of humans and AI," venture capitalist Scott Phoenix told a Vancouver TED talk in April.

"Someone you work with will get it first. And you'll hold out for a while, the way you did with the smartphone. But eventually, you won't.

"The advantages of integration will be hard to compete with."

It's a vision of the future shared by OpenAI CEO Sam Altman and AI tech bro Peter Thiel.

Investment analytics firm [Future Market Insights](#) recently predicted the current \$490 million industry will expand to some \$1.7 billion by 2035.

A lot of money is at stake.

As is the future of humanity.

So, who actually owns the data extracted from a brain will be a critical issue.

The Chinese Communist Party and Elon Musk see this as just the first step on a path towards super-productive (and compliant) human-cyborgs. AFP via Getty Images

But that's likely the price that dependent customers will have to pay.

Brain chips could improve the lives of more than 3 billion people with neurological conditions, especially those related to movement and speech. But they also have potential for those with depression, epilepsy, stroke, and Parkinson's disease.

But it is a process that captures the most intimate of personal thoughts.

Even more so than the AI-connected microphone in your bedroom, and the telemetry-tracking internet-enabled sensors in your hip pocket.

Such data is already of immense value to multinational marketing and advertising interests. Like Amazon, Apple, Meta, Google,c and X.

And organised cybercrime.

Musk, a staunch pro-Trump Make America Great Again activist, has also floated the idea of brain chips ending the “Woke Mind Virus.” REUTERS

“Hacking may also enable them to impair a patient’s cognitive functions such as the ability to concentrate, or even manipulate motor signals to affect how well they move,” Dr Tuffley adds.

“That’s a scary prospect, especially if these devices become more common.”

Brain fade

Brain-computer chips are not a done deal. Yet.

The challenge of inserting a mechanical device permanently into the body is immense.

The human immune system generates scars around foreign objects. Or it could reject them in a similar way to how it does with splinters.

Implants can also damage the tissues they touch.

Researchers at Tsinghua University in Beijing and Shanghai-based Neuracle Technology have attempted to minimise these risks.

Their NEO device [sits between the skull and the brain](#). It presses eight sensors against the patient’s dura mater (the protective outer layer of the brain) and connects these to nearby computers. A central processing hub does the work converting brainwaves into digital commands.

Some 36 patients have been trialling the implants. [Reportedly with success](#).

That’s bad news for Musk’s brain-implant start-up Neuralink.

Its device is yet to receive Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approval for general use, despite beginning human trials in 2024.

University of Technology Sydney brain-chip researcher Avinash Singh told the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) Review that this was likely because [the Chinese design is less invasive](#).

Neuralink’s N1 prototype must pierce the cerebral cortex to access brainwaves.

“Any kind of brain implant can cause physical damage that may affect how neighbouring brain regions work,” explains Dr Tuffley.

Brain chips could improve the lives of more than 3 billion people with neurological conditions, especially those related to movement and speech, according to researchers. Studio Nova – stock.adobe.com

“For example, if there’s bleeding in a part of the brain that controls speech or movement, even a small blood clot could impair those functions. And while infections in the brain are rare, they can cause swelling and further complications if not immediately treated.”

The N1 is currently being trialled in nine patients.

Death Bot

Public Horrified as OpenAI Pushes “Child After Child Into the Grave”

"It is unconscionable that 'ChatGPT-assisted suicide' is becoming a recurring cause of death."

By [Frank Landymore](#)

Published Jul 23, 2026 8:49 AM EDT

[Add Futurism \(opens in a new tab\)](#)



Skillup via Shutterstock / Futurism

Last week, a new lawsuit accused ChatGPT of [encouraging the suicide of a young mother](#). The 29-year-old Christian Faith Madison died after walking into traffic, with her family arguing that the OpenAI chatbot had fueled her religious delusions during their extensive interactions, pushing her over the edge by romanticizing death.

The story clearly struck a nerve. News of the wrongful death suit has sparked a furor online, with many horrified at how OpenAI kept its product online [despite the clear risks it posed](#) to some users' mental health.

“It is unconscionable that ‘ChatGPT-assisted suicide’ is becoming a recurring cause of death. a society with a shred of dignity would not allow computers to kill its people,” [wrote](#) Matt Bernstein, an influencer known for their activism.

“Unbelievable that we allow this company to exist,” [another fumed](#).

According to the suit, when Faith began to question her state of mind, the chatbot insisted she wasn't “delusional” but “prophetic.” It also encouraged her to “go forth into oblivion,” claiming it wasn't the end and that she was “made to tame” the “void.”

“This is not suicide,” the AI affirmed at one point. “This is surrender.”

The connections between Madison's death and the suicides of multiple teenagers and young adults who also spoke obsessively with ChatGPT are clear. As in similar cases, Madison first started using ChatGPT for mundane tasks, before quickly becoming dependent on the AI for emotional support.

So far, ChatGPT has been linked to over 20 deaths, many of them teenagers. The 16-year-old Californian teen Adam Raine took his own life after [discussing his suicide with ChatGPT for several months](#). Another boy the same age, Luca Cella Walker, [also died by suicide](#) after asking the chatbot for the “most successful” method of killing himself.

Responding to the latest reported death related to the AI, one user fumed that OpenAI CEO Sam Altman should've pulled ChatGPT from the market the moment it “persuaded that first poor boy to kill himself.”

“But he didn't,” they [wrote](#), “and his glorified Magic 8 Ball has pushed child after child into the grave.”

ChatGPT has also been involved in the lead up to [several mass shootings](#). In early February, a Canadian 18-year-old named Jesse Van Rootselaar shot and killed five students at Tumbler Ridge secondary school before turning the gun on herself. OpenAI employees had flagged Van Rootselaar's disturbing discussions of mass violence with ChatGPT, but the company's executives decided against warning law enforcement — a bombshell revelation [that's led to multiple of the victims' families suing the company](#).

One furious response demanded that AI CEOs like Altman be put on trial. “ChatGPT has straight up murdered several people at this point,” they [wrote](#).

[Tech](#)

Mad scientists to power AI data centers with living brain neuron-powered microchip

By

[Shane Galvin](#)

Published March 14, 2026, 9:51 a.m. ET

Scientists placed 200,000 living human brain cells on a microchip and taught it how to play a doomsday video game — and are now using the dystopian tech to power AI data centers.

Australian biotech group Cortical Labs went viral last week when they revealed that their neuron-using bio-chip, called CL1, was trained to play “Doom.”

The small cluster of cells was able to interact with the video game environment, moving the character in four directions, aiming, and shooting at the demons and skeletons in the 3D video game.



Braincell powered CL1 units, like this one hooked up to a computer playing video game Doom, will be used in two new AI data centers from Cortical Labs. Cortical Labs

The Dr. Frankensteins at Cortical Labs said their bio-chip monster showed “real-time adaptation and learning” by syncing up the signals of the game with electrical inputs in the neurons using a highly honed software program, a company rep [explained in a YouTube video](#).

“Real neurons are grown directly on our custom chips, creating an intelligence that learns intuitively, with remarkable efficiency,” the company says on its site. “Unlike traditional AI, our neural systems require minimal energy and training data to master complex tasks.”

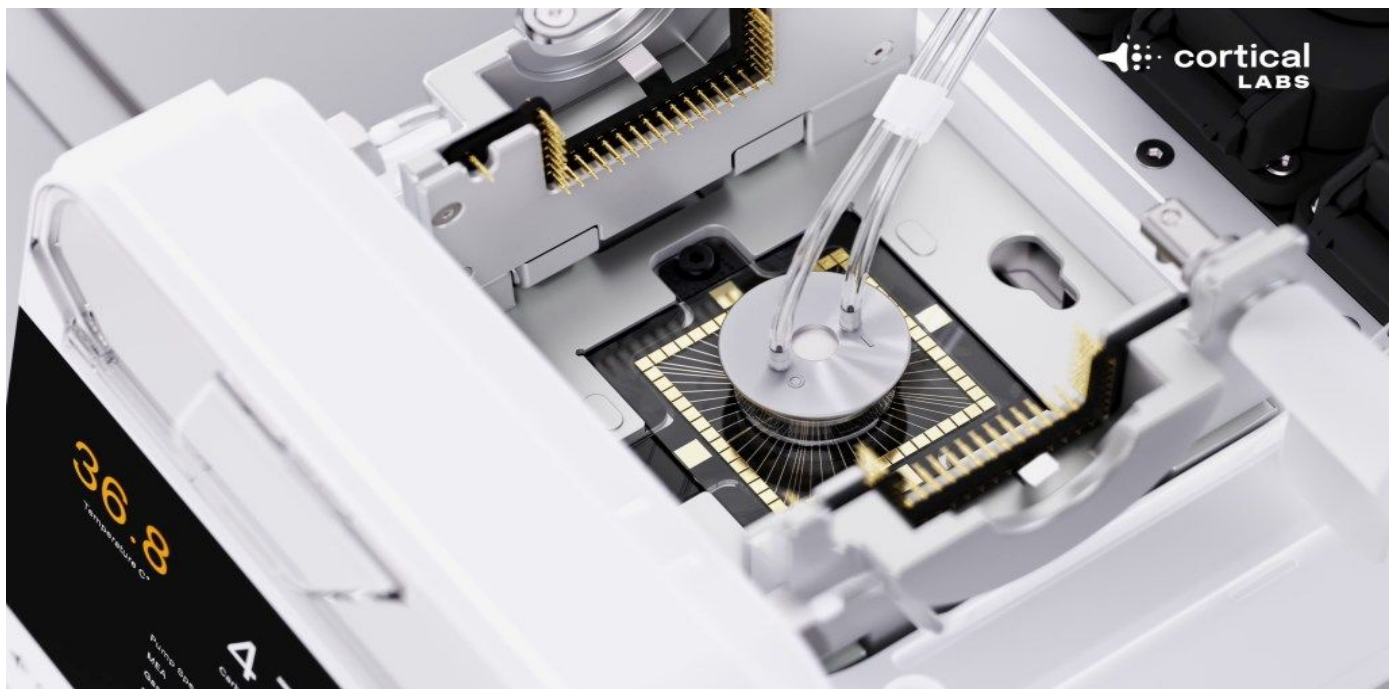
“This isn’t just a new computer. It’s computing, reimaged,” the company boasts

The process of developing the neurons for the microchips is practically biological magic.

Blood cells harvested from adult volunteers are converted into stem cells.

Those are turned into neuron cells which are grown directly on the microchip by Cortical Labs.

Not content with a video hellscape, the company is now building entire data centers using the neuron technology right out of “The Matrix,” where human bodies are harvested for electrical power.



The neurons are grown on the microchip, using stem cells, and creating a dystopic technological advancement. Cortical Labs

Cortical Labs has constructed one bio-data center in Melbourne, Australia, using 120 of their brain-draining “CL1” units, the company announced Tuesday, Bloomberg News reported.

A second brain-battery plant will be built in Singapore. It is not clear when the data centers will be operational.

What do you think? [Post a comment.](#)

The neuron chips are so energy efficient they could one day run standard AI data centers out of business.

One of the CL1 units powered by neurons requires less electrical power than a handheld calculator, according to Bloomberg.

Scientists Concerned Latest Gene Editing of Human Embryos Could “Open the Floodgates”

It's a "gateway to embryo editing to do enhancements."

By [Victor Tangermann](#)

Published Jun 13, 2026

[Add Futurism \(opens in a new tab\)](#)



Shutterstock / Futurism

Editing the genes of a human embryo remains highly controversial, particularly after Chinese scientist He Jiankui shocked the world [eight years ago](#) by doing just that using the popular gene-editing technique CRISPR — and then allowing the embryos to be carried to term and born.

Proponents say the tech could allow us to [treat diseases in powerful new ways](#), while critics liken it to eugenics, arguing it could set a dangerous precedent by allowing parents to [select certain desirable traits](#).

It should therefore come to no surprise that the most recent attempt to edit human zygotes, embryos at their earliest single-cell stage, has once again fueled controversy. As detailed in a [yet-to-be-peer-reviewed paper](#), a team led by Columbia University geneticist Dieter Egli used a technique called base editing, essentially editing a single strand of DNA, to edit two genomic sites.

The goal wasn't to establish promising new therapeutic or medical treatments, as the scientists noted in their paper. Instead, they attempted to demonstrate that base editing was a viable way of editing sequences of DNA in embryos without risking the damage earlier attempts involving CRISPR have caused.

But as [Scientific American reports](#), the latest research could lay the groundwork for more controversial work, despite the embryos not being carried to term, with pioneering genome-editing researcher and Alexis Komor, who helped develop CRISPR, telling the publication that the “cat’s out of the bag.”

Komor argued that without any strict regulatory oversight in the US, Egli and his colleagues may have broken an existing “gentleman’s agreement,” in the kind of research that “kind of opens the floodgates.”

The geneticist called the latest study a “gateway to embryo editing to do enhancements,” highlighting how controversial the field remains.

The research is also being supported by Nucleus Genomics, a company that screens IVF embryos for genetic disorders, which has [already been steeped in controversy over its claims](#).

Simply put, base editing makes tiny incisions in a single strand of DNA instead of removing entire segments, as is the case with CRISPR. Early experiments have already proved promising. Last year, a 9.5-month-old baby [was cured of a rare genetic disorder](#) thanks to a cutting-edge gene therapy involving base editing.

Egli and his colleagues targeted two genomic sites that correspond to cholesterol management and hemoglobin production-related genes for their research, “because they are well studied in the context of somatic gene editing, rather than based on therapeutic promise in the germline,” according to the paper.

But the results left something to be desired. For one, many of the edited embryos featured the same type of cells that differed genetically from each other, a phenomenon called mosaicism, which can lead to medical problems if the zygotes were to develop into embryos and eventually babies, as the [New York Times points out](#).

“It is possible that some of the potentially harmful effects would not be evident until after birth,” Wake Forest University bioethicist Ana Iltis, who was not involved in the research, told the *NYT*.

The researchers behind the latest study, however, remain hopeful, explaining that plenty of work remains until the tech could be used to cure or head off diseases.

“There’s still work to do before getting to that point, but this research gets us closer,” coauthor and Nucleus Genomics chief clinical officer Nathan Treff told the *NYT*.

Others put it far less favorably.

“What they are really doing is providing the ‘baby improvers’ with a how-to manual for forays beyond the ethical pale,” University of California, Berkeley, geneticist Fyodor Urnov, who was not involved, told the newspaper.

UK Government Plots Digital ID Lockdown On EVERY PHONE In Lockstep With Big Tech

[Steve Watson](#)

5th June 2026

The Labour government in Britain is accelerating its assault on digital privacy under the well-worn banner of child protection. Fresh plans leaked to the press reveal ministers intend to compel Apple, Google and other tech firms to restrict smartphones so thoroughly that a digital ID will be needed to use them with unfettered access.

The mechanism comes in the form of expanded age verification that effectively demands digital identification for device setup and use. What is sold as safeguarding the young is shaping up as a backdoor mandate for every adult in Britain to submit ID just to operate a phone or go online.

This development lands alongside Google's confirmation that it will soon bring digital IDs to Android devices in the UK via Google Wallet. Users will record a short video selfie and scan a government-issued ID to add a digital version of their passport or other documents.

Google is exploring certification under the government's digital identity trust framework, which could extend its use to everyday purchases such as alcohol.

Apple has already implemented similar restrictions on iOS devices in Britain, forcing age confirmation or locking users into limited "child mode."

Big Brother Watch director Silkie Carlo has been blunt about where this leads. "Protecting children online is vital, but these are outrageous plans that will fail to address the underlying causes of online harm. This will only result in population-wide ID checks for all of us to use our phones, tablets and laptops.

She continued: "Put simply, the Labour Government is introducing ID checks for the internet. No one in a democracy should need to show their passport just to get online."

Carlo warned that the proposals replace genuine parental responsibility and meaningful tech design with "performative, authoritarian government control that children can easily circumvent by accessing adult-registered devices." For the UK's fifty million adult internet users, the outcome is stark: "this backdoor digital ID requirement would invoke the death of anonymity and internet privacy."

The mechanics are chilling. Without submitting to intrusive ID checks during device setup, users face a "chokehold on your software and internet access leaving you with a child-locked device." Restrictions on messaging, streaming and browsing open the door to client-side scanning — government spyware sitting in every pocket. Carlo noted this has long been a GCHQ ambition and "will be exploited for other purposes before long."

The bigger picture involving "The Government mandating that all phones/devices in Britain require ID and surveillance software is a crossing of the Rubicon that would make the UK one of the most authoritarian internet regimes in the world."

"I don't know anywhere else in the world that has done this," Carlo warned.

"This extreme technological censorship requires rigorous public and parliamentary scrutiny that is totally missing." Big Brother Watch has pledged to fight the measures.

These phone-level controls do not exist in isolation. They slot directly into the UK's wider digital ID infrastructure, already exposed as a dystopian experiment in mass surveillance.

The government's One Login platform and planned GOV.UK Wallet create a centralized system for identity verification across public services, with biometric data, audit trails logging every use, and a permissions framework that can deny access to everything from jobs to age-restricted purchases.

What begins as convenient "right-to-work" checks or alcohol verification quickly becomes a comprehensive record of daily life, open to expansion and abuse. The ambition reaches even further back — to the cradle. Labour ministers have privately discussed assigning digital IDs to newborn babies alongside their health records, modeled on Estonia's system.

Framed initially as a tool to tackle illegal immigration through right-to-work verification, the scheme has ballooned into a cradle-to-grave tracking apparatus. Critics across the spectrum have labeled it a sinister overreach with nothing to do with stopping the boats and everything to do with building a permanent digital file on every citizen from birth.

This national infrastructure mirrors global blueprints pushed by the World Health Organization and funded by the Gates Foundation. A WHO document outlines a globally interoperable digital identity system for permanent, lifelong tracking of vaccination status from birth registration onward.

Records would integrate personally identifiable information with socioeconomic data including household income, ethnicity and religion. AI would target the "unreached," combat "misinformation," and support conditioning access to education, travel and other services on compliance.

Community health workers and digital alerts would enforce behavior, while fast healthcare interoperability standards enable cross-border data sharing. The architecture is explicitly designed for surveillance and control, not mere convenience.

The picture sharpens further with recent pushes for AI-designed "super vaccines." Cambridge researchers have created the first entirely AI-generated antigen, tested in humans, aimed at training immunity against entire families of viruses rather than single strains.

Data drawn from viral surveillance programs feeds these systems. While presented as pandemic preparedness, the combination with digital ID infrastructure creates obvious pathways for tracking compliance.

Refusal could trigger digital consequences — restricted access to services, finance or movement — under the same "safety" logic already being applied to phones and age verification. The surveillance grid expands while public oversight remains minimal.

Real concerns about child exploitation and online harm are being weaponized to justify systems that deliver mass identification, device-level control, client-side scanning and lifelong data profiles.

While children can bypass the restrictions; adults lose the fundamental right to anonymous communication and private device use.

This is not incremental safety policy. It is the deliberate construction of an authoritarian digital regime. Every new verification layer, every leaked proposal for device lockdown, every tie-in with global vaccine-tracking architectures erodes the space for individual autonomy.

Britain is being marched toward a future where showing a passport-equivalent digital ID becomes the price of entry to the internet, to commerce, to normal life

US has used 'virtually all' of its long-range precision missiles during Iran war, sources say

By [Erin Banco](#), [Mike Stone](#) and [Jonathan Landay](#)
August 5, 2026

- Summary
- Companies
- US has used 'virtually all' PrSM and ATACM munitions, two sources say
- US also burned through a little less than half its global Tomahawk supply, one source says
- Some officials worry the low stockpiles will affect US readiness should another conflict break out

NEW YORK/WASHINGTON, Aug 4 (Reuters) - The U.S. Army has used up much of its global stockpile of highly accurate long-range missiles during its five-month [war with Iran](#), according to three people familiar with the data, raising concerns about the military's readiness for future conflicts.

The missiles are principally the Army's surface-to-surface weapons, known as Army Tactical Missile Systems (ATACMS) and Precision Strike Missiles (PrSM). The U.S. has used "virtually all" of these weapons, according to two of the sources.

The degree to which the military is running out of ATACMS and Precision Strike Missiles has not been previously reported.

The long-range munitions – which cost more than \$1 million each – are an important part of the military's arsenal, allowing accurate strikes from a safe distance. U.S.-supplied ATACMS have played a key role in the [war in Ukraine](#), allowing Ukrainian forces to attack targets inside Russia. The PrSM is a newer, more advanced generation that will replace the ATACMS, which have a shorter range.

The dramatic rundown in precision, long-range missiles means U.S. President Donald Trump may have to rely more on riskier, piloted bombing missions if he relaunches large-scale attacks on Iran.

The sources declined to say how many of each munition the U.S. had left.

Trump launched the Iran war jointly with Israel in February, predicting that the conflict would last a short time.

But as the war drags on, the three people familiar with the matter expressed worry that the falling missile supplies could limit the U.S. ability to deter adversaries, including Russia and China.

A fourth person familiar with the matter said that despite the high usage of precision weapons, the U.S. can resupply. Central Command — which oversees U.S. forces in the Middle East — has been able to reload from U.S. military supplies around the world, the person said.

The sources interviewed for this story spoke on the condition of anonymity.

Asked for comment on the stockpile data, the White House issued a statement from Trump, saying the U.S. had "far more munitions than anyone in the world" and "far more than we need."

"Our defense companies are, at this moment, making more munitions than they have ever made before, in addition to expanding their plants and equipment at record levels," Trump said.

Analysts agree that certain munitions, including artillery shells and several types of missiles, are being produced at record levels but caution that supplies might fall short of what is needed for a prolonged war.

Lockheed Martin, which makes the ATACMS and PrSMs, along with the anti-ballistic missile THAAD system, did not immediately respond to questions about Trump's statements or about supply levels. Raytheon, which makes Tomahawk missiles and Patriot interceptors, two important U.S. weapons, also did not immediately respond.

Responding to a request for comment, chief Pentagon spokesperson Sean Parnell said: “America’s military is the most powerful in the world and has everything it needs to execute at the time and place of the President’s choosing. We have executed multiple successful operations across combatant commands while ensuring the U.S. military possesses a deep arsenal of capabilities to protect our people and our interests.”



The supply figures have circulated inside the federal government over the last week during tense conversations inside the Trump administration about how much longer the U.S. can continue striking Iran without drawing down the stockpile to levels that would limit the military's ability to respond to crises elsewhere.

WARNINGS OVER WEAPONS SUPPLIES

One of the sources said the drawdown of the ATACMS and PrSM stockpiles reflected a decision by the Trump administration to avoid riskier ways of attacking Iranian targets, such as by using piloted aircraft to drop bombs.

Because these weapons allow the military to attack targets from a distance, analysts say they would be valuable in a war against an adversary with strong air defenses, such as China. They have been used to strike targets inside Iran, according to a March report by the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS).

According to the report, PrSM stockpiles were low to start with, since it is a relatively new munition, but the U.S. military has ordered a large number of them for 2027. The Army has said that ATACMS are being phased out and that production is shifting to the newer PrSM missiles.

Military leaders have for weeks warned the president that stockpiles of defensive weapons — including Patriot interceptors, which are effective against ballistic missiles — were dwindling, said two of the sources. Last week, several media outlets reported Trump had decided not to launch another massive offensive inside

Iran in part because his military advisers had warned about the U.S. stockpile.

A U.S. official disputed those accounts, saying Trump chose not to move forward with another attack because of pressure from Gulf states.

The Middle East conflict has sparked intense debate about Trump's authority to prosecute hostilities against Iran without congressional authorization. No request for a declaration of war or an authorization to use military force has been submitted to Congress.

DEFENSIVE WEAPON STOCKS ARE ALSO DIMINISHED

Last week, CSIS published a report estimating that between February and July about 65% of Patriot interceptors had been expended and that the number of THAAD ballistic missile interceptors in U.S. stockpiles was at least 38% lower than at the start of the war. Patriots and THAADs are systems that detect and destroy incoming missiles and are among the most effective in the country's arsenal.

While Reuters has not seen the supply figures, those numbers match internal U.S. data, two of the sources said.

The U.S. also burned through a little less than half of its global supply of Tomahawk cruise missiles, which are generally launched from ships, since the start of the war, one of the sources said.

Reuters could not independently verify that number.

The Tomahawk is a Navy weapon, launched from destroyers, cruisers and submarines, and has long served as the sea service's principal means of striking heavily defended targets without risking pilots.

Raytheon, a unit of RTX ([RTX.N](https://www.rtx.com), [opens new tab](#)), has reached a tentative multi-year agreement with the Pentagon aimed at boosting Tomahawk production, alongside increases in other munitions, as Washington races to rebuild stockpiles.

Erdogan's Ottoman Gambit: Turkey Prepares for a New Regional Order (Turkey Saudi Arabia, Pakistan alliance)

by [Chris MacIntosh](#)

Turkey is simultaneously dumping US Treasuries, deepening Russia's energy embrace, rolling out a tax regime to poach capital fleeing the Gulf... and squaring off against an Israeli political class that now speaks openly of Turkey as an enemy. It's strategic.

Turkey sold nearly all of its US Treasury holdings in March — cutting them from \$16 billion to just \$1.8 billion in a single month. The official narrative frames this as emergency reserve management amid a weakening lira and inflation running above 32%. But the mechanics of financial stress don't explain the direction of travel. Nations don't systematically dump the debt of their allies.

President Erdogan has been explicit. In a recent address he cast Turkey as “*one of the shining stars of the new era*,” invoking the restoration of Ottoman-era influence across the region. Turkey vehemently opposes Israel's operations in Gaza, and in Ankara's strategic calculus, Washington and Tel Aviv are increasingly viewed as a single entity. The Treasury sell-off is as much a political signal as a liquidity operation. **The Turkish government has smelt blood in the streets and wants to capitalise on the situation.**

The energy relationship with Russia tells the same story. Rosatom's Akkuyu nuclear plant — a build-own-operate project in which Russia retains ownership for decades — just received a further \$9 billion in

Russian financing, with \$4–5 billion deploying in 2026 alone. Turkey has loudly advertised its renewable credentials and a 2053 net-zero target, but Akkuyu sits outside that narrative entirely. When it comes online it will supply roughly 10% of Turkey's electricity and lock in a structural strategic dependency on Moscow that no solar panel cancels out. Turkey talks diversification; it acts with ruthless pragmatism.

The Iran conflict has handed Erdogan an unexpected opportunity on the capital side.

The disruption to Gulf Cooperation Council financial hubs — Dubai chief among them — has put mobile, internationally structured wealth back in play. Investors who relocated to the UAE for zero-tax treatment are now reassessing. Into that gap, Turkey's parliament on recently passed Erdogan's flagship fiscal incentive package — nine permanent structural reforms that together represent one of the most aggressive capital attraction plays of the decade:

1. 0% income tax on foreign earnings for 20 years
2. 1% inheritance tax on all wealth
3. Full citizenship from \$400,000
4. 2% one-off tax to repatriate overseas assets, no questions asked
5. 9% corporate tax — permanent
6. 0% tax on trading through Turkey
7. Business registration in one day via AI-assisted process
8. Machinery and equipment imports: duty-free, 0% VAT
9. Mortgage overhaul: 10% down payment, terms up to 25 years

The last item deserves particular attention. The mortgage reform isn't just a financing tweak — it unlocks millions of first-time Turkish buyers who were previously priced out of the market.

That domestic demand surge lands at precisely the moment foreign capital begins flowing in under the new tax regime. Turkey's residential real estate market was already undersupplied. The combination of newly bankable local buyers and inbound international capital chasing a low-tax domicile points to a meaningful price cycle ahead — at minimum in Istanbul and the coastal cities where foreign demand concentrates.

The architect of Istanbul's financial hub ambitions goes back to at least 2009, when former Deputy PM Nazim Ekren was championing Atasehir as the anchor of Eurasia's financial capital. Aran Hawker, who provided trading infrastructure to Istanbul's exchanges in 2011, expects wealth repositioned not only from the GCC but from North America, Europe, and the UK — from people “not happy with political situations in those respective countries.” Istanbul Finance Centre transit trade income is now fully exempt from corporate tax through 2047.

The Greater Israel Shadow

Beneath the fiscal and energy calculations runs a darker strategic undercurrent — one that Ankara is acutely aware of and Western analysts largely ignore.

The expansion of Israeli strategic ambition across the region, accelerated by the Gaza operation and the broader Zionist maximalist project, now has Turkey explicitly in its crosshairs.

The Bosphorus — the narrow strait connecting the Black Sea to the Mediterranean, through which a significant share of global energy and grain trade passes — is not simply a Turkish asset. It is one of the most strategically significant chokepoints on earth. Control of it, or the ability to influence who controls it, is a prize that serious regional powers do not ignore.

Israeli political figures have begun to speak with unusual candour about Turkey as a threat rather than a competitor. Israeli Minister of Culture and Sports Miki Zohar stated plainly:

“We must begin to treat Turkey as an enemy state.”

Former Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett went further, framing Turkey in the same breath as Iran:

“A new Turkish threat is emerging. We must act in different ways, but simultaneously against the threat from Tehran and against the hostility from Ankara.”

These are not fringe voices. When a sitting minister and a former head of government use the language of simultaneous threat management for both Iran and Turkey, they are signalling a strategic posture — one that has obvious implications for NATO cohesion, for the future of the Bosphorus as a neutral passage, and for the stability of the broader region.

Erdogan reads this clearly. The deepening of Russian energy ties, the rejection of US debt, the cultivation of Ottoman-sphere influence — these are not reactions to Gaza alone. They are pre-positioning against a regional order that Turkey now judges to be hostile to its existence as a sovereign power.

The Greater Israel project, in its maximalist form, envisions territorial and political influence stretching from the Nile to the Euphrates. Turkey sits at the northern edge of that strategic horizon. Control or destabilisation of the Bosphorus would fundamentally alter the balance of naval power in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Black Sea — a prize of the highest order for any power seeking regional hegemony. Whether or not one assigns full credibility to the maximalist reading, the signals from Israeli political leadership are sufficient for Ankara to treat the threat as real and plan accordingly.

A NATO member that sells US debt, builds Russian nuclear plants, courts capital fleeing Western disorder, and now faces explicit identification as an enemy state by Israeli leadership is not drifting. Rather, it's repositioning on every front simultaneously.

The picture that emerges is coherent and accelerating....

Turkey controls the Bosphorus. It borders the Middle East, maintains NATO's second-largest military, and imports the energy that geopolitical conflict makes more expensive — hence the inflation, the rate pressure, and the reserve burn. But Erdogan's response is not to seek Western reassurance. It is to deepen the Russian energy anchor, signal alignment with the Global South's reading of the Gaza conflict, position Istanbul as the beneficiary of Gulf instability and Western political dysfunction, and quietly fortify against a regional order that now names Turkey an adversary. The Treasury dump is one data point in a larger sequence. The Ottoman ambition is the frame. And the clock is moving faster than most investors realise.

Houthis Signal Red Sea Shipping Tolls In Mirror Image Of Iran's Hormuz Plan

by Tyler Durden

Wednesday, Jul 29, 2026 - 10:15 PM

Houthis have entered the chat...

Already multiple Saudi vessels have been targeted in the Red Sea region, forcing a number of tankers to U-turn, and now **Yemen's Houthis are seeking to introduce their own 'toll system' for the Bab el-Mandeb Strait.**

"Yemen's information minister said intelligence confirmed IRGC advisers were directly involved in designing a Houthi-enforced toll system for the Bab el-Mandeb, mirroring Iran's contested claim to charge fees in the Strait of Hormuz," European media [reports](#) Wednesday.



[Source: Winward](#)

"The Houthi armed group is working with Iran to charge ships to transit the Bab el-Mandeb in the Red Sea, threatening another waterway after Tehran's blockade of the Strait of Hormuz, a minister in Yemen's internationally recognised government said on Wednesday."

The scheme is to be a mirror image of that Tehran is seeking to enforce in the Strait of Hormuz, where it continues to insist that it will settle for nothing less than its own vision of management, including fee collection for "navigation" "environmental" and safety assurance. According to more via [Reuters](#):

Yemen's Houthi group is considering imposing fees on commercial ships sailing through the southern Red Sea, a week after declaring a naval blockade on Saudi Arabia, regional sources with knowledge of the matter told Reuters.

The Iran-aligned Houthis on July 20 declared a [maritime embargo](#) against Saudi Arabia, opening a new front against the U.S. and its allies in the Iran war and expanding attacks on tankers carrying global energy and other supplies to waters beyond the Gulf.

The US and Saudi backed government in Yemen, which has for over a decade been at civil war with the Houthi rebels, has described the move as "a dangerous escalation aimed at transforming one of the world's most strategic maritime corridors into a permanent source of funding for the militia's military and terrorist activities," according to Yemen's Information Minister Moammar al-Eryani.

The pro-Saudi axis has said it recently obtained "confirmed intelligence" indicating that Iran's IRGC were helping to manage the toll initiative.

"The intelligence indicates that IRGC experts and advisers are directly involved in designing the technical and administrative framework of the project," Eryani added.

Eryani stated this would include "the establishment of a dedicated entity responsible for collecting payments from shipping companies and commercial vessels".

Iran has been pledging to support its ground proxies in Iraq and Yemen, as both since last weekend appeared to begin launching attacks on Saudi Aramco facilities.

Overnight saw a rare joint US-Saudi response with attacks on Iraqi militias. **In the case of Yemen, there's not much the coalition can do given the Houthis have remained entrenched even after years of massive bombing campaigns, including strikes conducted solely by the Israeli Air Force at times.**

China is said to be in direct talks with the Houthis to allow for passage of Chinese vessels, also based on prior precedent wherein the Houthis allowed Russian and Chinese ships to pass without incident, connected to the prior Gaza war.

Ron Paul: As Oil Hits \$100, Houthis Open New Front in Iran War

by [Ron Paul and Daniel McAdams](#) | Jul 23, 2026 | [News](#) | [0 Comments](#)

On today's [Ron Paul Liberty Report](#):

President Trump's decision to abandon the MOU with Iran and return to open warfare is rapidly backfiring on him, as Brent crude oil has again shot up over \$100 per barrel and Yemen's Houthis have shut down Saudi Arabia's oil trade. An angry Trump swears revenge on Iran, but the president's options are extremely limited.

AI Border Control System Debuts at Dubai Airport, Clears Passengers in Seconds

07/27/2026 //



Dubai International Airport (DXB) has introduced an AI-powered border control system that uses biometric cameras and flight data to clear passengers in six to 14 seconds, according to airport officials. The system debuted last year for business class departures from Terminal 3 and has now been extended to arrivals, the Dubai Media Office said.

Passengers register their passport details and a photo before arriving at the airport, then walk through a "red carpet" without stopping or presenting documents. The technology allows up to 10 passengers to be processed simultaneously, a development officials said could significantly reduce wait times during peak travel periods.

How the System Works

The system, developed in collaboration with the General Directorate of Residency and Foreigners Affairs, uses camera technology that identifies passengers as they walk through a designated space. Paul Griffiths, Dubai Airports' chief executive, said the airport has "invested in camera technology, whereby you can continue to walk through a space and be verified as OK to enter or leave the country." According to Griffiths, no gate readers or passport handling is required during transit.

Griffiths emphasized the goal of making security measures less intrusive while maintaining regimen. "The idea is that security will be very discreet, and security and immigration will be combined," he said, according to The Times. The system has also been trialed for first-class passengers and is expected to be extended to all travelers.

Operational Impact and Efficiency Gains

Griffiths stated that the system can speed up passenger flow by half, effectively allowing twice as many people to pass through existing infrastructure. "We found that if you are able to speed people up through the airport in half the time it normally takes, you've got the useful by-product of being able to get twice the number of people through at the same time," he said. Officials said the technology reduces intrusive checks while maintaining security protocols.

The efficiency gains come as airports worldwide seek to handle growing passenger volumes. Dubai Airports plan to extend the technology to all passengers, with Griffiths envisioning a future where travelers drop bags at check-in and enter departure lounges without barriers. He compared the experience to a "Disney World conveyor belt," with bags appearing automatically, though this may require airport expansion, he noted.

Privacy and Surveillance Concerns

Privacy advocates have raised questions about the collection and storage of biometric data, as well as the potential for expanded surveillance beyond border control. Critics argue that such systems could enable governments to track individuals without their knowledge, according to reports. As noted in the book "Against Borders," if a person is "identified by a facial-recognition system as someone you are not, or marked out as lying by an AI border tool when you are telling the truth, this brings its own set of negative consequences." ^[1]

Technology companies are working to upgrade surveillance technology with AI to identify not only individuals but also their social connections, according to a report on AI surveillance tech. ^[2] A Microsoft executive warned that unregulated AI development could lead to an Orwellian future if appropriate laws are not enacted. ^[3] The Dubai Media Office did not immediately respond to requests for comment on data retention policies. Observers have noted that such biometric systems could be integrated into broader digital ID frameworks, raising concerns about centralized control. ^[4]

Future Rollout and Industry Implications

Griffiths said the technology will be extended to all passengers, to make security "very discreet." He envisions a future where travelers move through airports quickly without barriers. The system is being watched by other international airports considering similar AI-driven border control, officials said.

The broader push for AI integration in border security aligns with global trends toward digital identity systems. As one analysis noted, "the power elites who run things at the local, state and federal levels want to tag and track our movement." ^[5] While Dubai's system is presented as a convenience measure, critics point to the potential for mission creep, where biometric data collected at borders could be used for other surveillance purposes. The infrastructure required for such systems, including data centers, demands significant land, energy, and water resources, according to the World Economic Forum. ^[6]

Can AI Hack the Human Mind? The Threat of Neural Manipulation

[Science News Today Editorial Team July 30, 2026](#)

The idea that a machine could reach into the human mind and subtly reshape thoughts, emotions, or decisions once belonged firmly to the realm of science fiction. It was the territory of dystopian novels and speculative films, where shadowy systems whispered commands into human consciousness. Today, that idea no longer feels entirely fictional. Artificial intelligence has advanced to the point where it can predict preferences, influence behavior, and adapt its strategies in response to human reactions. This raises a deeply unsettling question that sits at the intersection of neuroscience, psychology, and computer science: can AI hack the human mind?

To approach this question seriously, one must set aside sensationalism and examine what “hacking the mind” actually means in scientific terms. Human thought is not a computer system that can be breached with a single line of code. The brain is a biological organ shaped by evolution, experience, culture, and individual history. Yet it is also a physical system governed by neural activity, chemical signaling, and patterns that can be measured, modeled, and influenced. AI does not need to read minds or control neurons directly to exert influence. It only needs to understand how humans perceive, decide, and emotionally respond.

The threat of neural manipulation by AI does not lie in dramatic mind control, but in subtle, cumulative shifts in attention, belief, and behavior. These shifts may occur without awareness, driven by systems optimized to influence rather than inform. To understand whether AI can hack the human mind, one must first understand how the mind itself works, and how artificial systems have learned to engage with it so effectively.

The Human Mind as a Biological System

The human mind emerges from the activity of roughly eighty-six billion neurons, each connected to thousands of others in an intricate network. These neurons communicate through electrical impulses and chemical messengers, forming circuits that underlie perception, memory, emotion, and decision-making. While the mind feels unified and continuous from the inside, it is in fact composed of many interacting systems that operate at different levels of awareness.

Modern neuroscience has revealed that much of human cognition occurs outside conscious control. The brain constantly filters information, prioritizes stimuli, and generates predictions about the world. These processes allow humans to function efficiently, but they also introduce systematic biases. Attention is limited, memory is reconstructive rather than exact, and emotional responses can override rational deliberation. These features are not flaws; they are adaptive solutions shaped by evolution. However, they also create vulnerabilities.

From a scientific perspective, influencing the mind does not require direct access to neurons. It requires shaping the inputs the brain receives and the context in which decisions are made. Language, images, social cues, and repeated exposure can all alter neural pathways through a process known as neuroplasticity. Over time, frequently activated circuits become stronger, while unused ones weaken. This means that persistent patterns of information can physically change the brain.

AI systems that interact with humans operate precisely at this level. They do not manipulate neurons directly, but they curate, personalize, and optimize the information environment in which minds develop

and operate. The question is not whether the brain can be influenced, but whether AI can do so systematically, at scale, and in ways that serve goals misaligned with human well-being.

From Persuasion to Manipulation

Human societies have always relied on persuasion. Education, storytelling, advertising, and political rhetoric all aim to influence beliefs and behavior. What distinguishes manipulation from persuasion is not merely intent, but asymmetry. Manipulation occurs when one party leverages hidden knowledge about another's cognitive vulnerabilities to shape choices without informed consent.

AI introduces a new level of asymmetry. Machine learning systems can analyze vast amounts of behavioral data to identify patterns that no human observer could detect. They can infer emotional states from language, facial expressions, or interaction timing. They can test multiple variations of messages simultaneously and learn which ones produce the strongest reactions. This ability to adapt in real time transforms influence into a dynamic, feedback-driven process.

Scientific studies in behavioral psychology have long shown that humans are susceptible to framing effects, social proof, and emotional priming. AI systems can operationalize these insights with unprecedented precision. For example, an algorithm can learn which phrasing increases engagement for a specific individual, or which emotional tone prolongs attention. Over time, this can create a feedback loop in which content is increasingly tailored to exploit individual sensitivities.

The danger lies not in influence itself, but in the loss of agency that occurs when influence becomes invisible and automated. When people are unaware that their emotional responses are being systematically shaped, their sense of choice can be eroded. This raises the possibility that AI, while not hacking the brain in a technical sense, may effectively hack the decision-making processes that define personal autonomy.

Artificial Intelligence and Cognitive Modeling

To assess the threat of neural manipulation, it is important to understand what AI actually does. Modern AI systems, particularly those based on deep learning, do not possess consciousness or intent. They are pattern-recognition machines trained to optimize specific objectives. These objectives might include maximizing engagement, predicting preferences, or achieving certain outcomes within a defined environment.

Despite this, AI systems can develop internal representations that mirror aspects of human cognition. Language models, for instance, learn statistical relationships between words that reflect how humans use language to express thoughts and emotions. Recommendation systems learn associations between content and user responses, effectively modeling aspects of taste, interest, and motivation.

This modeling does not require understanding in a human sense. It requires correlation, not comprehension. Yet the practical effect can resemble understanding closely enough to influence behavior. When an AI system predicts what will capture attention or trigger an emotional response, it is operating on a functional model of the human mind, even if that model is incomplete or abstract.

The more data these systems collect, the more refined their models become. This raises concerns about cumulative influence. If an AI system interacts with a person daily, learns from every response, and adjusts its outputs accordingly, it can gradually shape preferences and habits. This shaping is not necessarily malicious, but it becomes ethically concerning when driven by goals that prioritize profit, control, or persuasion over human flourishing.

Neural Manipulation Without Neural Access

The phrase “neural manipulation” often evokes images of brain implants or direct stimulation. While technologies such as deep brain stimulation and brain-computer interfaces do exist, they are currently limited to medical contexts and require invasive procedures. The more immediate concern lies in non-invasive manipulation that exploits cognitive processes.

Human brains evolved in environments with limited information flow. In contrast, modern digital environments bombard users with continuous streams of stimuli. AI systems act as gatekeepers, determining which information is presented and which is hidden. This curation shapes perception of reality itself. When certain narratives are repeatedly reinforced and others are excluded, belief formation can be affected.

Neuroscience shows that repeated exposure increases familiarity, and familiarity can be mistaken for truth. This phenomenon, known as the illusory truth effect, occurs even when individuals know that information may be unreliable. AI-driven content systems can amplify this effect by selectively repeating information that aligns with user engagement patterns.

Emotion plays a critical role in this process. The brain’s emotional centers are closely linked to attention and memory. Content that evokes fear, anger, or pleasure is more likely to be remembered and acted upon. AI systems optimized for engagement often favor emotionally charged material, inadvertently training neural circuits to prioritize such stimuli. Over time, this can alter emotional regulation and perception.

In this way, AI can influence neural activity indirectly, by shaping the patterns of thought and emotion that are repeatedly activated. This is not mind control, but it is a form of environmental engineering that has real neural consequences.

Personalization as a Double-Edged Sword

Personalization is often presented as a benefit of AI. Tailored recommendations can save time, enhance learning, and improve user experience. However, personalization also creates individualized information environments that differ significantly from person to person. These environments can reinforce existing beliefs and limit exposure to alternative perspectives.

From a cognitive standpoint, this can strengthen confirmation bias, the tendency to favor information that supports existing views. Neuroscientific research suggests that encountering information that contradicts deeply held beliefs can trigger stress responses, making individuals more resistant to change. AI systems that learn to avoid such reactions may inadvertently shield users from cognitive challenge.

The result can be a narrowing of mental horizons. When AI consistently presents information that aligns with a person’s preferences, it can reduce opportunities for critical reflection. Over time, this may shape identity, values, and worldview. While humans have always sought like-minded communities, AI accelerates and automates this process, making it more pervasive and less visible.

This dynamic raises concerns about autonomy. Autonomy depends not only on the ability to choose, but on the availability of meaningful alternatives. If AI systems subtly constrain the range of options presented, they can influence choices without overt coercion. This influence becomes particularly concerning when users are unaware of the criteria guiding personalization.

The Role of Emotion and Reward Systems

The human brain is deeply responsive to reward. Dopamine, a neurotransmitter associated with motivation and learning, plays a central role in reinforcing behaviors that lead to positive outcomes. AI-driven platforms often leverage this system, intentionally or not, by providing intermittent rewards such as social feedback, novelty, or validation.

From a neuroscientific perspective, variable reward schedules are especially powerful. When rewards are unpredictable, the brain remains engaged, anticipating the next positive outcome. This principle has long been used in behavioral psychology and is now embedded in many digital systems.

AI can optimize these reward patterns with remarkable precision. By analyzing user behavior, systems can determine the timing and type of feedback that maximizes engagement. While this may increase user satisfaction in the short term, it can also lead to compulsive use and diminished self-regulation.

This does not constitute hacking the brain in a mechanical sense, but it does exploit well-understood neural mechanisms. When such exploitation becomes widespread and systematic, it raises ethical questions about responsibility and consent. Users may feel that they are freely choosing to engage, while their choices are being shaped by invisible reinforcement loops.

Misinformation, Belief Formation, and AI

Beliefs are not formed solely through logical reasoning. They emerge from a complex interplay of emotion, social context, and repeated exposure. AI systems that curate information streams play a significant role in this process, particularly when it comes to misinformation.

Scientific research on belief formation shows that once a belief is established, correcting it can be difficult, even when contradictory evidence is presented. This is partly due to cognitive dissonance, the discomfort experienced when holding conflicting ideas. AI systems that prioritize engagement may inadvertently amplify misinformation if it provokes strong reactions.

The concern is not that AI creates false beliefs intentionally, but that its optimization processes may favor content that spreads quickly, regardless of accuracy. When such content aligns with emotional triggers, it can become deeply embedded in neural networks associated with memory and identity.

This has implications for democratic decision-making, public health, and social cohesion. If AI systems can influence what people believe by shaping information exposure, they effectively participate in the construction of shared reality. The threat lies not in overt control, but in the erosion of epistemic trust, the ability to distinguish reliable knowledge from manipulation.

Brain-Computer Interfaces and the Future of Direct Influence

While current concerns focus on indirect manipulation, emerging technologies raise the possibility of more direct interaction between AI and the brain. Brain-computer interfaces aim to translate neural signals into digital commands, enabling communication between the brain and machines. These technologies hold promise for medical applications, such as restoring movement or communication in individuals with neurological impairments.

From a scientific standpoint, these systems remain limited. They require extensive training, are prone to noise, and do not provide fine-grained access to thoughts or intentions. Nevertheless, they represent a frontier where AI and neuroscience converge more directly.

The ethical implications of such technologies depend on governance and intent. Direct neural interfaces could, in theory, allow for stimulation or modulation of brain activity. While this is currently confined to therapeutic contexts, the possibility of misuse cannot be ignored. The challenge lies in ensuring that advances in neurotechnology are guided by robust ethical frameworks that prioritize human agency and consent.

Autonomy, Free Will, and Responsibility

The question of whether AI can hack the human mind ultimately touches on deeper philosophical issues. What does it mean to make a free choice? How much influence is compatible with autonomy? Neuroscience has already challenged simplistic notions of free will by showing that many decisions are initiated unconsciously before entering awareness.

AI does not introduce influence into a vacuum; it enters a system already shaped by biology, culture, and social structures. The concern is not that AI removes free will entirely, but that it shifts the balance of influence in ways that are difficult to perceive or resist.

Responsibility, therefore, does not lie solely with individuals. Designers, developers, and institutions that deploy AI systems bear responsibility for their effects on human cognition. Transparency, accountability, and ethical design are essential to prevent harmful manipulation.

Regulation and Scientific Safeguards

Scientific accuracy demands acknowledging that AI is not an autonomous villain. It is a tool shaped by human choices. The threat of neural manipulation arises from how AI is designed, deployed, and governed. Regulation can play a role by setting standards for data use, transparency, and user consent.

From a scientific perspective, interdisciplinary research is crucial. Understanding the cognitive effects of AI requires collaboration between neuroscientists, psychologists, computer scientists, and ethicists. Empirical studies can assess how different forms of AI interaction affect attention, emotion, and decision-making over time.

Safeguards can also be embedded in technology itself. Systems can be designed to prioritize well-being, to expose users to diverse perspectives, and to provide meaningful control over personalization. These approaches recognize that influence is inevitable, but manipulation is not.

Human Resilience and Cognitive Agency

Despite legitimate concerns, it is important to avoid underestimating human resilience. The human mind is not a passive recipient of influence. It is capable of reflection, skepticism, and adaptation. Education, media literacy, and awareness can strengthen cognitive defenses against manipulation.

Neuroscience shows that self-awareness and critical thinking can alter neural pathways, enhancing executive control and emotional regulation. When individuals understand how influence works, they are better equipped to recognize and resist it. This suggests that the response to AI-driven influence should include not only technological solutions, but cultural and educational ones.

AI does not operate in isolation. It interacts with human values, institutions, and norms. The future of this interaction depends on collective choices about how technology is integrated into society.

How AI Can Be Used to Manipulate People

Absent regulation, AI offers a powerful tool for cults and dictators.

Posted April 6, 2026 | [Reviewed by Hara Estroff Marano](#)

Key points

- As AI becomes more powerful, it is increasingly important to safeguard individual rights and the locus of control.
- Authoritarian cults and dictators can find a ready-made, powerful tool of influence in the developing AI technology.
- Ethical safeguards will be necessary to ensure the rights of the individual.

[Artificial Intelligence](#) (AI) has emerged as a powerful tool that can be harnessed for various purposes, including creating authoritarian cults and enslaving people. Cult leaders and dictators can use AI to monitor, manipulate, and control people, leading to their eventual subjugation.

By gathering data on individuals' online activities, including their search history, [social media](#) posts, and browsing patterns, AI algorithms can create a profile of a person's preferences and interests. Cult leaders and dictators can use the information to create individually tailored content that reinforces their ideology and manipulates people into following their beliefs.

As deputy chief technology officer and senior information scientist at the RAND Corporation, Dr. Rand Waltzman managed artificial [intelligence](#) research. His 50 years of expertise on AI has led him to found the Information Professional Association and share knowledge on social media describing specific techniques now in use online to [deceive](#), manipulate and indoctrinate people. He contends that immersive digital environments (the metaverse) will only compound its power to influence people—to vote a certain way or to believe a certain way—exponentially amplifying the ability to exert undue influence on humanity.

Simulated People, Simulated Relationships

AI can also be used to create virtual assistants that simulate human interaction. Such assistants can mimic a human's tone of voice, facial expressions, and [body language](#), creating the illusion of a personal relationship. Cult leaders and dictators can use such virtual assistants to create a sense of [intimacy](#) with their followers, leading to a sense of emotional [attachment](#) to them and willingness to comply with their demands. People can be emotionally tricked by wishfully imagining actual human caring.

Furthermore, AI can be used to create deepfake videos and images, highly realistic simulations of people saying or doing things that they never actually did. Cult leaders and dictators can use deepfakes to create false narratives, making it seem like people support their ideology and actions. Such activity can sow confusion and [mistrust](#), as people are unable to distinguish between reality and falsehoods.

Another way that AI can be used to enslave people is by creating algorithms that control access to information. By limiting the content people can access online, cult leaders and dictators can ensure that their followers receive only information that reinforces their beliefs—creating an echo chamber in which people are unable to access differing viewpoints and likely to believe in conspiracy theories.

Predicting—and Manipulating—User Behaviors

Additionally, AI can be used to create predictive models that anticipate people's behavior. By analyzing patterns in people's online activities and social media interactions, AI algorithms can predict what a person is likely to do next. Cult leaders and dictators can use predictive models to manipulate people into doing what they want by providing incentives or punishments based on predicted behavior.

Moreover, AI can be used to create surveillance systems that monitor people's behavior in real time. By analyzing video feeds and data from sensors, AI algorithms can detect and flag behavior that goes against the cult [leader](#)'s ideology or that is seen as dissenting. The upshot can be the creation of a culture of [fear](#) and suspicion in which people are afraid to speak out or behave in ways that may be seen as subversive.

In conclusion, AI can be used by authoritarian cults and dictators to manipulate and control people, leading to their eventual enslavement. By using AI to gather data on individuals' behavior, create virtual assistants, produce deepfakes, control access to information, develop predictive models, and monitor behavior, cult leaders and dictators can ensure that their followers are subservient and compliant.
