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Investigating whether Donald Trump has the power to ban US antifa movement

Summary

- President Donald Trump has posted on social media that he wants to "designate" the US anti-fascist movement - known as antifa - as a "terrorist organisation"
- We're looking at what makes up "antifa" and the protections it is given by the constitutional right to free speech in the US

- Footage verified by our team **shows a fire burning at an oil refinery deep inside Russia** after an apparent Ukrainian drone attack
- BBC Verify uses open-source intelligence, satellite imagery, fact-checking and data analysis to help report complex stories
- This feed is where we post our work throughout the day
- **Get in touch with us by following this link**

Live Reporting

Edited by Rob Corp

09:53

Data indicates Trump's tariffs have not generated 'trillions' for US Treasury



Tom Edgington
BBC Verify senior journalist

During the Chequers event with business leaders earlier this afternoon, Donald Trump also talked about the success of his tariff regime, which he called "Liberation Day" when announced back in April.

He claimed the US has "taken in trillions of dollars from tariffs and they've been so incredible for our country, so incredible".

The Bipartisan Policy Centre - a Washington DC based think-tank - **has been tracking revenue generated from tariffs and certain other excise duties** this year, based on US Treasury data.

Its analysis shows that from 1 January to 16 September \$163.5bn (£120.5bn) has been generated. Compared with recent years, this figure is significantly above trend, but it is far short of the "trillions" claimed by Trump.

It could be that Trump was referring to a Congressional Budget Office estimate from last month.

The US government agency suggested the tariffs could reduce the US deficit by \$3.3tn over the next 10 years. However, it added that the changes in tariffs “will reduce the size” of the US economy.

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09:37

Get involved with BBC Verify



Rob Corp
BBC Verify Live editor

BBC Verify is dedicated to examining the facts and claims behind a story to try to determine whether or not it is true - whether that's a political statement, a video shared on social media, or images from a war zone.

And we're also keen to hear from you - is there something you think we should investigate? We're particularly interested in claims you have heard or seen that maybe don't seem right.

Or perhaps you've come across something online and want to know if it was created using AI or even a deepfake.

You can send **[your suggestions to the team here.](#)**



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09:00

Was Donald Trump right to say US inflation is ‘virtually non-existent’?



Tom Edgington
BBC Verify senior journalist

President Donald Trump has been speaking to business leaders at a joint event with UK Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer in which he made several claims about the US economy.

Among them was that inflation - a measure of prices of goods rising over time - was “virtually non-existent” in the US.

This isn't true. Official figures **provided by the US Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) showed** prices rose 2.9% over the 12 months to August - the fastest pace since January and above the Federal Reserve's 2% target.

Food in particular rose above the headline rate last month. It was 3.2% compared with 2.9% in July.

Trump has previously attacked the BLS and **last month fired its head, saying** - without evidence - that she rigged job numbers to make him look bad.

US inflation at 2.9% in August

Consumer Price Index, 12-month percentage change



Source: US Bureau of Labor Statistics

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Why did the internet go down in Gaza yesterday?



Richard Irvine-Brown
BBC Verify journalist

As we reported yesterday on BBC Verify Live the Gaza Strip has been affected by a significant telecommunications outage which is limiting what we're seeing being posted online today. With international journalists barred from Gaza, finding and verifying footage on social media and messaging apps is a key way we can report what's happening there.

This morning we checked social and local media sources but saw very little from overnight. Among the last things we saw posted late yesterday was a video showing an apparent strike on Gaza City's al-Shifa Hospital, at dusk, in which 12 people were reportedly killed.

Isik Mater, director of research at NetBlocks - an organisation that monitors internet access around the world - said the disruption was "severe but not unique" and on a par with some previous outages in the Strip.

NetBlocks believes it was caused by damage to a main fibre link which runs through Israel to international exchanges.

The local telecoms firm PalTel told NetBlocks that neither planned engineering works nor international shutdowns were to blame.

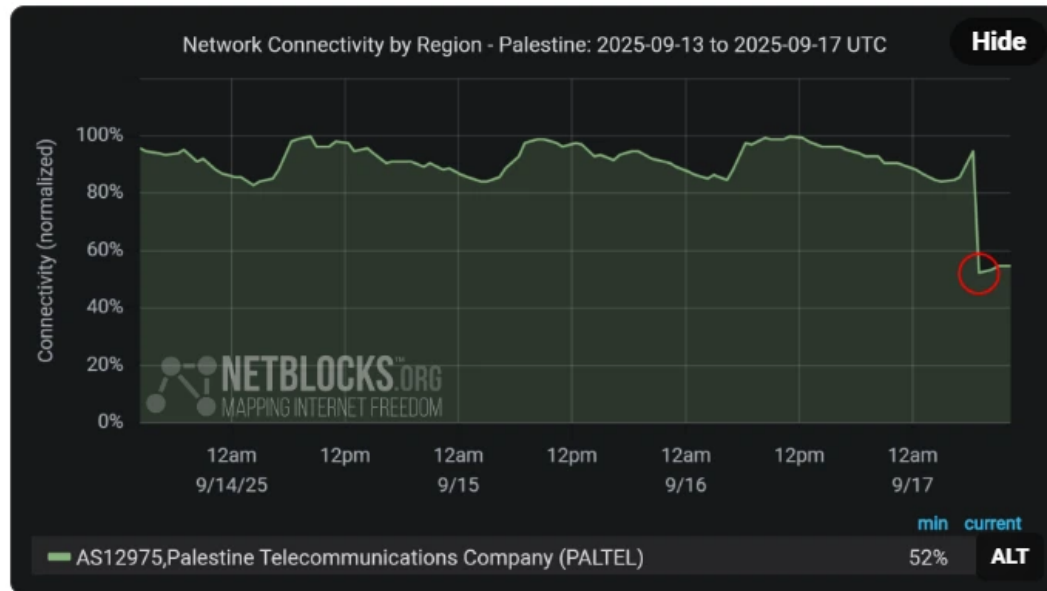
We're in touch with PalTel and waiting for their comments on what's happening. Local media report engineers are trying to repair the lines.

Netblocks' Mater says that after almost two years of war the infrastructure is so damaged that connectivity in Gaza is now a quarter of what it was previously.



NetBlocks
@netblocks@mastodon.social

⚠️ Confirmed: Metrics show a significant disruption to connectivity in the #Gaza Strip with high impact to the north; the incident, attributed to the targeting of one of the main fiber optic routes, comes amid a new Israeli ground operation in the region



NETBLOCKS 12:05 · 🌐 · Web

🔗 Share

08:11

Does Trump have the power to designate antifa a 'terrorist organization'?



Lucy Gilder
BBC Verify journalist



We've been speaking to legal experts who have called into question US President Donald Trump's legal authority to designate antifa as a "major terrorist organization".

The existing rules do allow the government, specifically the State Department, to make a list of "foreign terrorist organizations" which makes it a crime to give funds or other "material support" to those groups.

But the key word here is "foreign" - and those experts we have spoken to pointed out that free speech rights under the US constitution's first amendment would limit Trump's ability to ban - or restrict funding for - **domestic movements like antifa**.

"Under the First Amendment, no one can be punished for joining a group or giving money to a group," Professor David Schanzer, director of the Triangle Center on Terrorism and Homeland Security at Duke University, told BBC Verify.

Prof Schanzer added that a president designating an organisation a "major terrorist organization" has no effect on "those fundamental rights".

Rumen Cholakov, an expert in US constitutional law at King's College London, also said first amendment rights could protect antifa activists against government action.

He told us that if the government were to use its powers against them in the US their actions would be “potentially susceptible to constitutional challenges” in court for violating these rights.

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07:37

Verified footage shows al-Qaeda affiliate destroying fuel convoy in Mali

Sebastian Vandermeersch and Peter Mwai
BBC Verify



| A grab from the verified video shows a fighter watching as lorry burns

An al-Qaeda linked group in Mali has attacked and destroyed many vehicles in a large convoy of about 80 fuel tankers being escorted by the Malian military, according to footage circulating online.

The lorries were travelling from the capital Bamako towards Senegal on 14 September when they were hit by fighters from Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin (JNIM), a militant group which operates in the region.

Videos of the attack show JNIM fighters approaching several ablaze trucks, which are throwing up enormous plumes of smoke. Extensive gunfire can be heard in the background.

Aftermath footage, seemingly filmed by civilians using the road, shows dozens of burnt out trucks lined up on the dirt road. Nasa's Firms fire-detection data allowed us to geolocate the footage by cross-checking the co-ordinates with Google Earth satellite imagery to identify a telecommunications mast visible in one of the videos.

Satellite imagery from Planet Labs captured on Tuesday also shows burn scars, smoke plumes, and rows of destroyed lorries – consistent with the footage. It also showed a long line of of stuck vehicles seen stretching back for about 3km (1.8 miles) towards Senegal.

The attack is part of a new JNIM campaign to blockade Kayes, one of Mali's most strategically important regions connecting Mali to Senegal and Mauritania. Along these roads, JNIM has restricted the flow of goods by extorting traders, abducting foreign drivers and attacking convoys - including torching fuel tankers, lorries and buses.

A video posted online today appears to show JNIM fighters back at the site riding motorcycles past a large number of burnt fuel tankers while some traffic can be seen moving again along the road.

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07:06

Pace of house building 'unacceptable', says new minister



Daniel Wainwright
BBC Verify senior data journalist

The number of planning applications granted in England has fallen to another record low, according to figures out this morning, which the new housing secretary Steve Reed has called "unacceptable".

Data showed just over 7,000 applications for housing were granted permission between April and June 2025 - the lowest three-month figure since records began in 1979 and an 8% fall on the same three months of 2024.

An application can be either “minor” for fewer than 10 homes or “major” for 10 or more.

Separate data from **housing contractor Glenigan** suggests 221,000 individual homes were granted permission in the year to June, down from 237,000 in the year to June 2024.

Reed said: “Fixing the archaic planning system won’t happen overnight. But because of the reforms we have introduced, we will see the biggest era of housebuilding in our country’s history.”

Conservative shadow housing secretary Sir James Cleverly said: “[Labour] promised to ‘build, build, build’ but their flagship planning reforms clearly aren't working.”

Planning approvals for housing at record lows

Total decisions and permission granted for housing developments, England by quarter, Apr 1979 - Jun 2025



Source: Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government

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More verified footage shows fire at plant deep inside Russia



Emma Pengelly
BBC Verify journalist

Following reports of a **Ukrainian attack more than 1,000km (620 miles) inside Russia**, we've now verified new video which gives us a closer view of the apparent target in Salavat, Bashkortostan.

Filmed from a busy roadside the clip shows a structure alight at the Gazprom Neftekhim Salavat plant and a black smoke plume billows over the area.

We've confirmed the location by matching chimneys and pylons visible in street-level images to those seen in the video.

It's overcast and cloudy in the footage which is consistent with multiple weather reports for Salavat today and other verified material of the same incident.

As we mentioned earlier, the head of Bashkortostan confirmed an attack and a fire at the site too. You can watch the full video showing the fire in Salavat below.

Meanwhile Ukraine has also reported strikes by Russia. Its air force reported 75 drones were launched overnight.



Salavat plant fire after reported Ukrainian attack

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05:52

Who are antifa?

Shayan Sardarizadeh and Kayleen Devlin
BBC Verify



Antifa and far-right activists clashing at protests in Portland, Oregon in 2021

Donald Trump has announced that he plans to designate antifa as a “major terrorist organization” in a post on his Truth Social platform.

This isn't the first time the US president has made such an announcement. During his first term in May 2020, he **tweeted** plans to designate the far-left movement a terrorist organisation following protests over the murder of George Floyd.

It's a movement we've **looked at before**, but unlike a political party or organisation antifa isn't an organised or structured group. It is usually identified more of a loose, leaderless movement of protesters and activists whose name stands for "anti-fascist".

In the US, the movement saw a surge of interest after the election of Donald Trump in 2016. Since then, antifa activists have routinely clashed with far-right demonstrators and police, both in heated arguments online and also in violent protests across the US - in particular **during 2017 counter-protests** in Charlottesville and following Floyd's killing by a police officer.

Critics of the movement say what sets antifa apart from those on the mainstream left is the willingness among some activists to use violence to further their cause. Antifa supporters, in turn, say the use of force is in self-defence or to defend their communities.

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04:51

Reported Ukrainian strike on petrochemical plant deep inside Russia

Paul Brown and Emma Pengelly
BBC Verify

We're investigating reports of a Ukrainian drone attack on a petrochemical facility deep inside Russia, after new videos and photos of smoke rising into the sky were shared on Telegram this morning.

We've confirmed one video - showing a long plume of smoke - was filmed more than 1,000km (620 miles) away from Ukraine's

border in Salavat, a city in western Russia's Bashkortostan republic.

The smoke in the footage is rising from the direction of the Gazprom Neftekhim Salavat plant, which this morning the head of Bashkortostan said had been attacked.

Radiy Khabirov added a fire at the site, which processes a variety of petrochemical products like refining oil and producing fertilisers, was being extinguished.



We're also seeing unconfirmed reports of a Ukrainian attack on an oil refinery in the Volgograd region, further west of Salavat.

Volgograd's regional governor Andrei Bocharov said a "massive drone attack" was "repelled" overnight. We're looking for new satellite imagery and videos to get a better picture of what happened - currently we're only seeing grainy videos filmed in the dark that aren't possible to geolocate.

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04:25

Welcome to BBC Verify Live



Rob Corp
BBC Verify Live editor

As US President Donald Trump's UK state visit continues for its second and final day we're examining his announcement - posted on the Truth Social platform last night - that he wants to designate the so-called "antifa" anti-fascist movement in the US as a "terrorist organisation".

We'll look at what the term antifa means in the US and how any move to outlaw it would sit with the constitutional right to free speech.

We're investigating a widespread communications outage in the Gaza Strip which the internet monitoring group Netblocks says has been caused by a break in a fibre optic connection.

We touched on this briefly yesterday but with the internet still down in Gaza we're trying to find out how widespread the problem is and what may have caused it.

Our verification team is also looking through images from Ukraine and Russia as further strikes have been reported on both sides of the border overnight. The head of Russia's Bashkortostan Republic has said an oil refinery was attacked in the city of Salavat - more than 1,000km from the Ukrainian border. We're looking to verify his claim.

More on those stories to come plus we're monitoring further monsoon flooding in India using footage posted online.



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