# Maryland Governor to Pardon 175,000 Marijuana Convictions, Clearing Paths to Opportunities



### Maryland Governor to Pardon 175,000 Marijuana Convictions

Maryland Governor Wes Moore is set to issue an executive order pardoning 175,000 low-level marijuana convictions on June 17, 2024. This decision, coinciding with the Juneteenth holiday, will impact an estimated 100,000 individuals by clearing their records of misdemeanor marijuana possession charges. These charges, as Moore noted, have historically hindered access to housing, employment, and education. Since Maryland voters legalized recreational cannabis in 2023, this move represents a significant step towards addressing past racial inequities in law enforcement.

### Netanyahu Dissolves Israel's War Cabinet

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has disbanded his war cabinet, consisting of senior ministers including centrist political figures Benny Gantz and Gadi Eisenkot. The dissolution follows Gantz's recent resignation, criticizing Netanyahu's handling of the ongoing conflict with Hamas in Gaza. The action comes amid demands from Netanyahu's far-right coalition partners for more influence in strategic decisions. The war cabinet's responsibilities, particularly concerning security and military operations, will now be assumed by other ministerial forums.

### Global Nuclear Weapons Spending on the Rise

A report from the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) reveals a 13% increase in global nuclear weapons expenditure, reaching $91.4 billion in 2023. The United States remains the largest spender at $51.5 billion, followed by China at $11.9 billion. All nine nuclear-armed countries, including Russia, the UK, France, India, Israel, Pakistan, and North Korea, have increased their budgets. ICAN anticipates global spending to reach $100 billion in 2024.

### Heatwave Poses Risks for Hajj Pilgrims

Temperatures soared to 49°C (120°F) in Mecca, Saudi Arabia, during the Hajj pilgrimage, causing at least 14 deaths among Jordanian pilgrims. The Saudi Health Ministry reported over 2,700 cases of heat stress and sunstroke amongst the 1.8 million attendees. Climate scientists warn that such extreme conditions, exacerbated by climate change, will continue to pose significant risks during future Hajj pilgrimages.

### US Heatwave Alert

The National Weather Service has issued warnings for “dangerously hot conditions” in the midwest and northeast regions of the United States, affecting millions of Americans. Temperatures in cities like New York and Chicago are expected to reach up to 40.5°C (105°F). The heatwave underscores a growing trend of extreme weather events attributed to climate change.