

Google Maps renames Lake Ontario ‘Lake America’ in US -- but not Canada

AFP | Washington, United States

Google redesignated Lake Ontario as “Lake America” on maps seen by US users Sunday after President Donald Trump announced he was renaming the body of water, with a Canadian official slamming the cross-border tensions as “absolutely backwards.”

People in Canada will still see Lake Ontario, the Indigenous-rooted name used for the lake since the 17th century, on their devices and computers, the US-based tech giant said.

The shock nomenclatural spat erupted as the latest element of Trump’s “America First” narrative, with longtime allies the United States and Canada ramping up a trade war that has seen Washington and Ottawa slap tit-for-tat tariffs on each other.

Apple’s Maps app that comes installed on all iPhones makes no mention of “Lake America” on its maps as of Sunday morning.

Google said it made its change in line with the US Geographic Names Information System (GNIS), the official federal database for geographic names.



US President Donald Trump, alongside Secretary of the Interior Doug Burgum, displays an executive order he signed that aims to rename Lake Ontario to Lake America in the Oval Office of the White House in Washington, DC

“Since we update Google Maps to reflect name changes in official government sources, which is GNIS for the US, people using Maps in the US will see ‘Lake America,’ those in Can-

ada will continue to see ‘Lake Ontario,’ and those outside of the US and Canada will see both names,” Google said on its blog.

The change mirrors Trump’s unilateral altering of the name

of the Gulf of Mexico to the Gulf of America in January 2025 -- a move Mexico has also rejected.

Ontario is the smallest by surface area of the five Great Lakes, which straddle the Canada-US

border between Ontario province and the US state of New York.

The province’s premier, Doug Ford, offered fresh criticism Sunday of the trade dispute and

Trump’s lake name change.

“It’s absolutely backwards. It was like something out of (US comedy TV show) ‘Saturday Night Live’ when he signed a document saying -- changed to ‘Lake America.’ No one’s going to call it Lake of America,” Ford told ABC talk show “This Week.”

“It’s just so disappointing.”

Ford also warned that while a trade war would harm both countries, “it’d be definitely devastating on the US” given that Canada has been by far the largest purchaser of US vehicles. Should those buys dry up, US auto factories would be hit hard.

“A tariff on Canada is nothing more than a tax on American people,” he said. “It’s probably the worst move you could ever do.”

Canada and the US have a deeply interconnected auto manufacturing sector, and a sizeable portion of parts for US vehicles are made in Canada.

Trump himself waded in Sunday to say Americans “want to make our own cars.”

“Canada has been ripping us off for years -- NO LONGER!” Trump posted on his Truth Social platform.

At least seven die in ferry capsizes off Northern Cyprus; 23 missing

- The ferry had been carrying a total of 267 people, at least seven of whom died
- 23 people were missing, and 172 had been rescued.

AFP | Girne Kepuveia, Cyprus

A passenger ferry capsized and sank off Northern Cyprus yesterday, killing at least seven people and leaving 23 missing, officials said, as a rescue operation was under way.

The cause was not yet established. But one rescued passenger told local media a blast went off at the bow of the ferry before it rolled over.

The vessel capsized 6.5 kilometres (four miles) off the coast of Cyprus, shortly after it had left a Northern Cyprus port heading to Turkey’s mainland.

Images broadcast by Turkish television showed the upside-down ferry in the water, with people wearing life vests atop its orange hull.

The ferry had been carrying a total of 267 people, at least seven of whom died, Unal Ustel, prime minister of the self-proclaimed Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC), told Turkish media.

He added that 23 people were missing, and 172 had been rescued.

Shortly afterwards, the TRNC’s transport minister said the ferry “has” completely sunk



Turkish vessels, aircraft, and rescue rafts are pictured off the port of Kyrenia in the self-proclaimed Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC), recognis

to a depth of 514 metres (1,686 feet).”

The minister, Erhan Arikli, told Turkish television network TRT that 161 people had been taken to hospital and 76 were back with their families.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said during a public ceremony that “efforts to find the missing are continuing tirelessly. We hope to receive positive news from these efforts”.

The TRNC, which is recognised only by Turkey, controls the northern third of the island of Cyprus, which has been divided since 1974.

Ankara occupied that part of the island that year in response to an Athens-engineered Greek Cypriot coup seeking union

with Greece. The TRNC today is served with regular air and sea links to Turkey.

The rescued passenger who spoke of a blast on board told local TRNC television after he was taken back ashore: “The front part exploded, they tried to turn around. And the side windows blew out. The boat starting taking on water.”

Many inside

The man, aged in his 50s and not named, said he spent an hour and a half in the water before being rescued. He said many people had been inside the ferry at the moment started taking on water.

“Those who could, got out,” he said, adding that he saw the captain among the first to aban-

don ship “without organising anything”.

Many boats, including private ones, were involved in the rescue operation. Turkey’s interior ministry said on X that six Turkish navy ships were also dispatched.

“All necessary preparations are being made for a swift response from rescue and health services,” the TRNC’s health ministry said in a statement.

It added that hospitals in the territory had been alerted, to provide any needed medical attention.

The ferry had departed from the Northern Cyprus port of Kyrenia -- called Girne Kepuveia in Turkish -- on a run meant to take it to the Turkish port of Tasucu.

Pakistan suspends eight officials after deadly infant ward fire



A man carries the body of a newborn child who died following a fire at the Mother and Child Health (MCH) ward of the Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS) Hospital, during a funeral in Rawalpindi

AFP | Islamabad, Pakistan

Pakistan’s prime minister said eight officials were suspended and called for criminal proceedings against them, after 14 infants were killed in a fire in the maternity ward of a hospital in the country’s capital.

A preliminary report conducted by a four-person committee formed by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif found the deadly blaze had engulfed the unit “within approximately two minutes” just after 6:30am (0130 GMT) on Wednesday, with a nurse only able to save one of the 15 infants in the hospital’s care.

Among those suspended were hospital staff including its executive director and the head of the neonatal department, as well as the director-general of Islamabad’s emergency services.

Sharif said late Saturday “those responsible for criminal negligence do not deserve any concession” and that they will be “brought to justice”.

He also approved taking action against the company responsible for the hospital’s security, without naming them.

Emergency services were called within six minutes of the fire breaking out, with the first rescue services arriving at the scene 15 minutes later, the report said.

Parents and other witnesses told AFP the response had been slow and guards had reportedly prevented people from leaving the building.

The hospital did not have detailed operating procedures or fire and emergency training, according to the preliminary report.

Two nurses, a woman security guard and another officer were in the ward when the fire started, but there were no supervising staff, the report stated. Earlier Health Minister Mustafa Kamal said that a spark from an air conditioner is believed to have caused the fire. The report clarified an ignition source is yet to be determined as the investigation continues.