

# Iran denies Trump's claim of talks; Israeli strikes on Gaza kill over 30 since Friday "deal"; Cuba's electricity collapses again

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## Iran

- **Trump says U.S.-Iran talks will resume Monday; Tehran says no negotiations underway:** President Donald Trump [announced](#) that renewed diplomatic negotiations with Iran would begin on Monday afternoon, claiming he had shelved plans for what he had previously described as "biggest attack since World War II."
  - Speaking to reporters onboard Air Force One, President Trump stated that the impending military operation was aborted at the last minute following direct appeals from key Middle Eastern allies, including Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and the UAE.
  - He also told reporters that the talks would address the Strait of Hormuz and the "denuclearization of Iran."
  - Iran's Foreign Ministry [said](#) Monday that Tehran is "not holding any negotiations with the United States at present," stressing that ongoing talks are exclusively with Oman and focused on reaching "an understanding on the safe passage of ships through the Strait of Hormuz," Iran's Mehr News Agency reported.
  - At a weekly press briefing, Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmail Baghaei said that Iran "has never been the first party to violate any understanding," adding that "the ball has been in the U.S. court for quite some time" after Washington announced on July 7 that it would no longer honor its commitments under the June 17 memorandum of understanding.
- **Iran strikes Kuwait:** Iran [launched](#) strikes toward Kuwait overnight Friday, Kuwait's Defense Ministry reported, claiming that it disabled the wave of attacks.
  - The ministry accused Iran of targeting several vital sites, including a government facility in northern Kuwait and civilian vehicles belonging to a company on Bubiyan Island.

- **U.S. begins to withdraw from Erbil:** The U.S. began withdrawing its remaining forces and heavy equipment from the military compound near Erbil airport on Saturday, including all Patriot air-defense batteries, as Washington approaches a September 30 deadline for a full troop pullout from Iraq, Al-Monitor reports.

- Sources said U.S. interceptors had stopped at least 95% of strikes targeting Erbil airport, leaving Kurdish officials concerned that the region is now more exposed. Remaining U.S. special forces may continue operating from smaller, low-profile locations in the country, an analyst said.

- **NYT: U.S. dropped a 2,000-pound bomb on family in Qeshm:** Video, satellite imagery, and weapons analysis indicate the U.S. dropped a 2,000-pound bomb on a family home in a densely populated residential neighborhood on Iran's Qeshm Island overnight Thursday, The New York Times [reported](#) on Saturday.

- The strike killed a husband, wife, and their 2-year-old son. Two other children, now orphaned, were pulled alive from the rubble.

- **Iranian FM says Iran will respond “decisively” to attacks:** Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi [warned](#) on Saturday that Iran is prepared to respond “decisively” to any U.S. aggression, according to the Iranian state-affiliated outlet Tasnim News.

- Araghchi held calls on Saturday with Pakistan Field Marshal Asim Munir, Saudi Foreign Minister Faisal bin Farhan, and Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan to discuss the “destabilizing consequences” of U.S. actions in the region.

- **Iran announces that it is near agreement for Hormuz control:** Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi [said](#) on Sunday that talks with Oman over a mechanism to govern the strait are “nearing completion and in their final stages,” according to state news agency IRNA.

- Iran has previously demanded control over both of the northern and southern routes that transit the Strait, and has rejected a proposal from Oman and the U.S. that would give it control of only one.

- Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmail Baghaei said Monday that negotiations with Oman are focused on establishing a single, intermediate two-way shipping corridor to temporarily replace the existing northern and southern routes until a permanent Traffic Separation Scheme (TSS) is agreed upon.

- **MBS notes Saudi concern about strikes on call with Trump:** Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman [reportedly urged](#) Trump to de-escalate and hold off on infrastructure strikes against Iran, asking for “clarity” on Trump’s war plans.

- The Wall Street Journal, however, reported on Sunday that the UAE [lobbied](#) President Trump to take “more decisive action” against Iran, arguing that the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps would not compromise unless Washington escalated, took control of the Strait of Hormuz and potentially considered ground operations, the report says.

- **Iran says several countries tell its FM they will not participate in future U.S. strikes:** A spokesperson for Iran’s Foreign Ministry [announced](#) on Sunday that “in the past 24 hours,” representatives from the U.K., Bulgaria, and Ukraine had contacted the FM and said that they would not play any role in potential U.S. attacks on Iran.

- The FM noted in the same statement that any country that did participate in these strikes would “face Iran’s legitimate defense,” and noted that this included countries who “provided bases or military and logistical facilities” to the U.S.

- **Two more executed in Iran:** Iran executed two men on Monday convicted on charges of spying for Israel during both the June 2025 war and the ongoing conflict, according to the state affiliated news agency Mizan. The two men were identified as Omid Behzad and Pouria Safvat.

- Last week, Iran publicly hanged two men convicted of killing police officers during mass anti-government protests in January. At least 60 others convicted on charges related to the protests are at risk of execution, [according](#) to Amnesty International.

- “The Iranian authorities are unleashing a horrifying wave of executions and death sentences to punish and suppress dissent and project an image of strength and absolute control in the wake of the January popular uprising and amid ongoing attacks by U.S. and Israeli forces,” Heba Morayef, Regional Director for the Middle East and North Africa at Amnesty International, said in a statement.

## Yemen

- **Ansarallah will not charge for Bab Al-Mandab transit, officials say:** Ansarallah’s maritime coordination body [denied](#) that it had plans to charge commercial vessels for passing

through Bab Al-Mandab, and affirmed that transit through the waterway would remain free, The New Arab reported on Saturday.

- The body said the “safe transit service” it has devised in light of its embargo on Saudi shipping is voluntary and free.
- Officials warned shipping companies not to make payments to or share information with unauthorized parties.
- **Two Saudi oil tankers transit Bab Al-Mandab despite Ansarallah blockade:** Shipping data showed that two tankers carrying Saudi crude transited the Bab Al-Mandab Strait over the weekend despite Ansarallah’s declared maritime blockade of Saudi Arabia since July 20. According to Kpler data, the Suezmax tanker Lesbos, carrying about 1 million barrels of Saudi crude, and the VLCC DHT Vibhav, carrying 2 million barrels, both left the Red Sea with their Automatic Identification System (AIS) transponders switched off.

## Palestine

- **Killed and wounded in Gaza:** Over the past 24 hours, 19 Palestinians were killed—18 in new attacks and one succumbing to wounds—and 35 were injured in Israeli attacks across Gaza, according to the Palestinian Ministry of Health.
  - The total recorded death toll since October 7, 2023 has risen to 73,375 killed, with 174,220 injured. Since October 11, the first full day of the so-called ceasefire, Israel has killed at least 1,250 Palestinians in Gaza and wounded 4,110, while 804 bodies have been recovered from under the rubble.
- **Israel kills 34 Palestinians, wounds 134 since Gaza deal announcement:** Since Trump’s Friday announcement of a “historic agreement” and Hamas’s acceptance of phase two of the Gaza ceasefire deal, conditioned on Israeli compliance, Israeli attacks have killed at least 34 Palestinians and wounded 134 others across the Strip, according to Gaza’s Ministry of Health.
  - An Israeli drone [targeted](#) the Sheikh Radwan neighborhood of Gaza City Saturday, killing two Palestinians and wounding several others, WAFA reported. An attack later on Saturday killed another Palestinian in the Sabra neighborhood.
  - An Israeli drone strike on the Al-Mawasi area, near Khan Younis, [killed](#) one Palestinian and injured others Saturday.
  - Also on Saturday, an Israeli drone struck Deir Al-Balah and [killed](#) four Palestinians, wounding others.

- **Drop Site contributor Abdel Qader Sabbah** filed a report from an attack near Al-Aqsa Martyrs hospital in Deir Al-Balah, which destroyed two central medicine warehouses, including critical equipment for kidney dialysis, and nearby tents sheltering displaced families. One resident asked, “What did we do to deserve this?” and noted that residents believed that the latest deal announced by Trump would improve their situation. “What did we do wrong?” she asked. “What did we do to deserve this, us and the dialysis patients? Who among us is guilty?” **The full dispatch is available [here](#).**
- On Sunday, an Israeli [strike](#) on an apartment building in Gaza City killed two Palestinians, including a child, and wounded several others.
- A separate Israeli airstrike west of Khan Younis [killed](#) three members of a family, including a child. Another Israeli attack on Sunday afternoon in the area wounded five, three of whom were children.
- An Israeli attack on Sunday [targeted](#) an apartment building in Gaza City, killing an entire family of four, including a 5-year-old and an unborn baby that was reportedly ripped from its mother’s body by the force of the blast.
- Hamas issued a statement [condemning](#) the attacks on Sunday, noting that “criminal and frenzied bombardment” had killed 18 Palestinians since dawn and accusing Israel of deliberately escalating to sabotage the recently announced ceasefire agreement.
- Nickolay Mladenov, who leads the U.S.-backed “Board of Peace,” [responded](#) to the Israeli strikes by noting that the attacks had killed civilians and “destroyed medical supplies that people depend on,” without naming or condemning Israel.
- Senior Hamas official Basem Naim criticized the ongoing Israeli attacks: “At a time when Hamas demonstrated considerable flexibility and a high degree of responsibility by agreeing to the roadmap presented by the Board of Peace for the transition to the second phase of the Gaza War Termination Agreement, the Israeli occupation significantly escalated its targeting of civilians,” he said in a statement. “Its attacks have not ceased since the understandings were announced.”
- **UN: 67% of Gaza faces food insecurity, 10% nears famine:** The head of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) in the occupied Palestinian territory, Justin Brady, [warned](#) Monday that Gaza remains in a food emergency and is at risk of reaching Phase 5 of the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC), the threshold for an official famine declaration, Al Jazeera reported.

- **Report: Israeli forces, settlers carried out 2,256 attacks in West Bank in July:** Israeli forces and settlers [carried out](#) 2,256 attacks against Palestinians, their land, and property across the occupied West Bank in July, according to the Wall and Settlement Resistance Commission. Israeli forces were responsible for 1,458 attacks and settlers for 798, the group said, describing the violence as a coordinated campaign in which the military provides “protection and support” for settler attacks.

- Settlers killed seven Palestinians in Nablus and Ramallah, uprooted, damaged, or poisoned 5,027 trees, damaged property in 440 incidents, and attempted to establish 29 new settlement outposts.

- Israeli authorities issued 33 military orders targeting more than 830 dunams (~205,000 acres) of Palestinian land and carried out 80 demolition operations, destroying 165 structures.

- **Israel continues its attacks in the occupied West Bank:**

- **Ramallah:** Israeli settlers beat and injured a Palestinian farmer and his wife in Beitillu on Saturday; footage published later showed bandages on the couple’s arms and legs. Israeli forces beat and pepper-sprayed at least three Palestinians, according to WAFA. A 19-year-old Palestinian was seriously wounded on Sunday after Israeli forces shot him in the thigh during a raid at the entrance to Jalazone refugee camp. Also in al-Mughayyir, an Israeli soldier on leave was arrested for allegedly taking part in the murder of a 10-year-old at a sheep farm outside of the town, according to Israel’s Kan Media.

- **Nablus:** Israeli forces issued a demolition order on Saturday for the family home of Faroukh Ramadan, the resident of Tal who defended himself by seizing the weapon of an Israeli settler who was pointing the gun at him, opening fire and killing the settler on July 24. Israeli [settlers](#) cut and damaged electrical poles in Madama, south of Nablus, on Sunday, WAFA reported, leaving residents without electricity. Israeli forces also conducted raids east of Nablus, [breaking into](#) several homes before dawn and detaining at least two residents.

- **Tulkarm:** Israeli forces [ordered](#) residents of the Jabal Al-Salihin area east of Nur Shams refugee camp Monday to evacuate their homes, citing planned military operations and possible explosions. The military also deployed bulldozers.

- **Jenin:** Israeli settlers [destroyed](#) part of a tobacco crop in the plain of Arraba on Saturday evening, WAFA reported, noting that settlers also hurled stones at Palestinian vehicles at a road leading into the village.
- **Hebron:** Israeli settlers [carried](#) out similar attacks in Idhna, throwing stones at cars while receiving protection from the Israeli military. Israeli forces [detained](#) 11 Palestinians working the fields in the village of Khashem al-Daraj, near Yatta, on Saturday.
- **Occupied East Jerusalem:** Israeli settlers [attacked](#) the Armenian Church in the Old City on Sunday, throwing stones and collectively spitting at its entrance, according to WAFA.
- **Israel agreed to halt attacks, Palestinian close to Kushner claims:** Mohammad Dahlan, the exiled former Fatah security chief in Gaza who is based in the UAE and has emerged as an influential figure in post-war planning, said Jared Kushner, President Donald Trump's son-in-law and lead Gaza mediator, assured him he reached an agreement with Israel to cease the assaults starting Sunday morning, as part of the roadmap deal Hamas and other factions approved this week.
  - Dahlan later deleted the portion of the tweet mentioning a U.S. agreement with Israel to end its attacks.
- **Israel says it will not withdraw from Gaza despite agreement:** The Israeli Prime Minister's Office [issued](#) on Sunday its first public reaction since U.S. President Trump announced the Board of Peace agreement with Palestinian resistance factions earlier this week, saying that Israel would not withdraw from Gaza and claiming it had "serious" concerns about Hamas' continued operations in the Strip and potential to "expand" absent an Israeli presence.
  - Israel has reportedly demanded continued freedom to strike and kill Palestinians in Gaza as part of the newest agreement, according to the AP.
- **Israeli court freezes Ben Gvir plan for crocodiles in prison moat over animal rights concerns:** An Israeli court on Sunday imposed a temporary injunction freezing a plan by National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir to place crocodiles in moats around Ketziot Prison where Palestinians are held following a petition by the animal rights group Let Animals Live. The petition requested that crocodiles be reclassified as a protected species. "The claims regarding the expected harm to the crocodiles merit investigation and justify

issuing an order prohibiting the transfer,” Judge Avraham Rubin wrote in the ruling, [according](#) to Times of Israel.

· **Family of Palestinian in viral photo of Israeli soldiers mocking him appeals for urgent action:** The family of Mahmoud Al-Drimli, the Palestinian identified as the blindfolded man in a widely circulated photograph with two female Israeli soldiers smiling next to a detained Mahmoud, has [appealed](#) for urgent international intervention to determine his fate and secure his release nearly two years after he disappeared while attempting to return to Gaza City.

· The family called on the International Committee of the Red Cross, the United Nations, and humanitarian organizations to intervene and ensure his physical and psychological safety and work toward his release.

· His parents previously [told](#) Drop Site they have received no information about him since his disappearance in November 2024.

## Lebanon

· **Israeli phosphorus attacks hit southern Lebanon despite ceasefire:**

· Overnight, Israeli warplanes struck the Ali Al-Taher heights on the outskirts of Nabatieh Al-Fawqa. Forces [fired](#) phosphorus munitions that ignited fires in olive groves and pine forests around Yaroun and the city of Bint Jbeil.

· Israeli artillery [shelled](#) Mais Al-Jabal in the Marjayoun district, Lebanon’s National News Agency (NNA) reported, while an Israeli drone [dropped](#) a stun grenade on a pickup truck in Al-Mansouri in Tyre district, setting it ablaze.

· **Lebanon-Israel talks progressing while blast wounds five Lebanese soldiers:** U.S. Ambassador Michel Issa [said](#) he is encouraged by ongoing negotiations in Rome between Lebanon and Israel, according to the NNA. Issa said “significant technical work” remains to ensure civilian safety and stressed that “there is a meaningful difference between drafting an agreement on paper and implementing it responsibly.”

· Separately, the Lebanese Army [said](#) five soldiers were wounded while accompanying civilians in Kafr Kila in Bint Jbeil district on Sunday. The army later said an investigation determined the explosion was caused by a “suspicious object” and was continuing to determine the remaining circumstances. Israel’s military claimed the explosive device belonged to Hezbollah.

- An Israeli officer was [wounded](#) overnight Saturday during what the Israeli military described as a “close-quarters encounter” with Hezbollah fighters in southern Lebanon, AFP reported. The military said the officer was injured during “operational activity” in the area, without providing further details.

## U.S. News

- **Major primary contests set for Michigan, Missouri, Washington state, Kansas, Virginia:** The most-watched race Tuesday is the Senate contest between Dr. **Abdul El-Sayed** and Rep. **Haley Stevens**. Polls show El-Sayed with a double-digit lead over Stevens despite more than \$60 million being spent to boost Stevens and blunt El-Sayed. For context, \$60 million is several times more than the entire Democratic National Committee has in cash on hand. More than \$30 million of that spending comes directly from United Democracy Project (UDP), the super PAC set up by AIPAC.

- In **Mid-Michigan**, **Will Lawrence**, [another anti-genocide candidate opposed by pro-Israel money](#), is leading in the polls against two centrist opponents. Meanwhile, a bizarre influx of money from what appears to be a Republican-linked super PAC has come in last-minute to boost Lawrence.

- In **Detroit**, state Rep. **Donovan McKinney**, with the backing of DSA, Justice Democrats, and American Priorities (the anti-AIPAC PAC) is challenging incumbent Rep. **Shri Thanedar**. Polls have McKinney trailing but volunteers are flooding into Detroit to get out enough of the vote to overcome the remaining margin. The race is expected to be very close.

- In **St. Louis**, former Rep. **Cori Bush** is in a rematch against AIPAC-backed **Wesley Bell**. Bush remains an underdog, but a strong anti-establishment wave could be enough to carry her back into office.

- **Rep. Haley Stevens features pastor with anti-LGBTQ, Islamophobic history in Michigan Senate ad:** Days before Michigan’s Tuesday Democratic Senate primary, Representative Haley Stevens released a campaign ad [featuring Bishop Christopher Martin](#) of Flint’s Cathedral of Faith Ministries, who has a history of anti-LGBTQ sermons and recently shared Facebook posts warning of a “Muslim takeover” in the U.S., [The Lever reported](#).

- Martin, who told The Lever he has been “working with Haley Stevens” and is “glad to be in the ad,” defended his past comments, saying he is “not homophobic” but does not believe gay people should serve as pastors.

- **Justice Department scraps parts of Trump's IRS deal to save Blanche's AG**

**confirmation:** Acting Attorney General **Todd Blanche** [confirmed](#) the Justice Department is abandoning key elements of the settlement it struck with Trump over his lawsuit against the IRS, bowing to demands from Republican Sens. **John Cornyn** and **Thom Tillis** who had threatened to block his confirmation.

- Blanche posted a signed memo formally nullifying the \$1.8 “anti-weaponization fund,” which would have paid allies of Trump who claimed that they were persecuted by the government, and a second statement narrowing immunity previously granted to Trump’s entire family and several associates to Trump, two of his sons, and the Trump Organization.

- The move comes days before the Senate Judiciary Committee is set to vote Tuesday on Blanche’s nomination.

- **Sen. Bernie Moreno calls former son-in-law Rep. Max Miller “unfit for office”:** Ohio Republican Senator **Bernie Moreno** publicly [spoke out](#) against his former son-in-law Rep. **Max Miller** (R-Ohio) for the first time on Sunday, writing on X that Miller, “fails” basic character standards for elected officer, that he “holds [his] breath every minute he has custody of [Moreno’s] granddaughter,” and calling for Miller to “seek professional help.”

- Miller has been accused by his ex-wife, **Emily Moreno**, of throwing hot water from a skillet at her body, and of holding a gun to her head. She has also accused him of fracturing their young daughter’s collarbone. He denies the allegations. Miller was also accused of abusing **Stephanie Grisham**, a former White House press secretary, during a relationship the two had while both worked in the White House.

- Democrats have called for a House Ethics Committee investigation, while most Republicans, including **Rep. Jim Jordan**, have defended Miller or stayed silent. Miller’s re-election has also come into question, with his formerly safe Republican seat now viewed as a “toss-up.”

- **Education Secretary Linda McMahon asks universities to commit to reforms by end of 2026:** **McMahon** [sent](#) a letter on Monday to U.S. university leaders asking them to reexamine admissions practices, hire more conservative faculty, crack down on student protests, reduce foreign donations, and lower tuition, according to Bloomberg News.

- The letter, which was drafted with input from the Association of American Universities, carries no direct penalties for noncompliance, though a White House

official said schools that do announce reforms may have more influence over the roughly \$200 billion federal research funding system.

- **Author of DNC autopsy says party buried chapter questioning Biden's 2024 run:** Paul Rivera, the author of the Democratic National Committee's unfinished 2024 election autopsy, [told](#) The New York Times on Sunday that a chapter titled "What Happened in 2024"—which questioned President **Joe Biden's** decision to seek re-election and criticized Democratic strategists that grew "generationally wealthy" off politics—was omitted from the draft the party released in May.

- DNC chair **Ken Martin** denied Rivera's account, saying in a written statement that he was never given the chapter and that it was not found in an extensive search of party files.

- **Senate appropriators unveil stopgap bill to avert shutdown:** Senate appropriators [released](#) text Sunday of a bipartisan stopgap funding bill that would keep federal agencies funded through December 11 at current levels and delay broader budget negotiations until after the November midterms.

- The bill includes a temporary ban on a White House proposal to let political appointees approve federal grants.

- Unlike the House version, the Senate plan bars new funding for immigration enforcement agencies and omits major funding increases for the military sought by the Trump administration.

 Have a tip on Capitol Hill? Email DC Correspondent Julian Andreone at [Julian@dropsitenews.com](mailto:Julian@dropsitenews.com)

## Other International News

- **Drone strikes Russian Black Sea resort, killing six:** Russian authorities said a drone [struck](#) a crowded beach near the resort town of Gelendzhik in the southern Krasnodar region on Monday, killing six people, including three children, and injuring roughly 40 others.

- The regional governor accused Ukraine of deliberately targeting civilians, while a Russian Foreign Ministry spokesperson called the attack terrorism. Ukraine did not immediately comment, and the origin of the drone remains unconfirmed.

- **Suicide bombing kills 17 outside police station in northwest Pakistan:** An [explosion](#) outside a police station in Swat's Kabal area killed 17 and wounded at least 34 on Sunday,

according to police and rescue officials. Seven police officers were among the dead, and authorities believe one of those killed was the bomber.

- A rally by local residents supporting the police was underway nearby.
- The Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan claimed responsibility for the attack in a statement issued after the bombing.
- **Read Drop Site's [report](#) on the Pakistani military's violent crackdown on a protest movement in Kashmir.**
- **Cuban electricity grid collapses again:** Cuba's electrical grid [collapsed](#) Sunday night, cutting power across the island in the latest of several nationwide failures this summer. The state electricity utility did not immediately identify the trigger or provide a restoration timetable.
  - The grid had already collapsed three times over nine days in July, including an outage that affected roughly 10 million people.
  - Washington's oil blockade following the U.S. seizure of Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro cut off supplies from Cuba's principal oil provider; Mexican shipments have also stopped under U.S. pressure.
  - Colombian President Gustavo Petro visited Cuba in a show of solidarity where he called on Trump to [engage in dialogue](#) and find a diplomatic solution.
- **Trump's shadow envoy in Venezuela is out:** Mauricio Claver-Carone, the Miami businessman operating as Donald Trump's informal Caracas envoy, has stepped down. Following the U.S. capture of Maduro, Claver-Carone shaped Venezuela policy, brokered corporate access to oil reserves, and steered lucrative contracts without an official government role.
  - Claver-Carone claims he voluntarily handed control to standard diplomatic channels, but administration sources say he was pushed out. State Department and White House officials reportedly grew tired of his heavy-handed style, reliance on shadowy intermediaries, and the chaotic corporate feeding frenzy surrounding the intervention, according to [Reuters](#).
- **Taiwan defense chief [states](#) that U.S. military ties are "far closer" than publicly understood:** Taiwanese Defense Minister Wellington Koo said cooperation with the United States is "far closer than many people imagine," citing expanding exchanges with U.S. Indo-Pacific Command at multiple levels to strengthen the island's combat readiness.

- China has intensified naval, air and coast guard operations around Taiwan, including along its Pacific coast, prompting Taiwanese exercises preparing for a possible blockade.
- **Sudanese army drone strike on a community court in Darfur kills at least 35:** At least 35 people **were killed** and others wounded when drones belonging to the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) struck a customary court in the village of al-Zawiya Ghara, in North Darfur, according to the Sudanese rights group Emergency Lawyers.
  - Civilians and community leaders had gathered under a tree to resolve local disputes when the strike hit, killing four tribal leaders and two RSF commanders, according to Al Jazeera.
  - The RSF holds territorial control over most of North Darfur as well as the capital El Fasher, following the collapse of SAF after an intensive, 18-month siege.
- **Secretary of State Marco Rubio claims Cuba is operating a vast espionage and influence network inside the United States:** Rubio called the country an “influence and espionage superpower” and a national security threat. “There’s nothing organic about it. It is funded, it is organized and Cuba is a part of that network and in some cases a critical part of the network,” Rubio told Fox News. ([link](#))
  - Critics note that the administration’s expanding allegations against Cuba are a pretext to build public support for potential illegal military action against the country.
  - **ICYMI: Trump and NYT Say There’s a Russian Spy Base in Cuba. Turns Out, It’s a School.**
- **Turkey and Iraq sign one-year deal to keep Iraqi crude flowing to the Mediterranean, bypassing the Gulf:** A 50-year treaty governing Iraq-Turkey pipeline to the Mediterranean port of Ceyhan recently expired. Turkey’s energy minister said the deal, signed between Turkey’s state energy company BOTAS and Iraq’s state oil firms SOMO and NOC, **covers** a transit capacity of 750,000 barrels per day and buys time to negotiate a long-term pact.
  - The route’s strategic value has grown sharply amid the regional war: it carries Iraqi oil to the Mediterranean without passing through the Strait of Hormuz or the Red Sea, the chokepoints thrown into crisis by the US war on Iran and the Ansarallah blockade.

- **U.S. Treasury steps in to help Japan's yen:** The Federal Reserve Bank of New York reportedly **sold** euros to purchase yen after the yen **fell** to its weakest level in 40 years, nearing 164 yen per dollar.

- The operation marked the first joint U.S.-Japan currency intervention since 2011 and helped push the dollar down to around 157 yen. Japanese authorities may have spent as much as \$59 billion supporting the currency, while Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent's notes indicated a proposed U.S. purchase of between \$5 billion and \$10 billion in yen.

- Asked why Washington was helping, Trump said Japan had requested assistance and that the U.S. was "always there for Japan." "Japan's been very good to us, with the exception, of course, of Pearl Harbor," Trump added. "It's also good for the world economy."