

Hormuz grinds to a halt again; Gaza's cancer patients dying at 2-3 times prewar rate; DHS surveilled left-wing groups in Minnesota

Drop Site Daily: August 14, 2026

Iran

- **Two ships attacked in Hormuz, UAE blames Iran:** The UAE [accused](#) Iran of attacking two vessels affiliated with the Abu Dhabi National Oil Company on Thursday, while the ships were transiting the Strait of Hormuz. No injuries were reported as a result of the attack.
 - The UAE Foreign Ministry called the attack a violation of UN Security Council Resolution 2817 and an “act of piracy” by Iran’s Revolutionary Guard Corps. It demanded that Iran halt its attacks and “completely and unconditionally” reopen the Strait
- **U.S. sends new carrier to Middle East:** The U.S. aircraft carrier USS George Washington [headed](#) to the Middle East on Thursday to replace the USS Abraham Lincoln, which has been deployed in the region for more than 250 days, according to an announcement from the Navy.
 - The George Washington strike group departed Vietnam on August 12, the Navy said.
 - The Lincoln’s deployment had been expected to end in May but was extended as the U.S. war on Iran continued.
 - The news comes after reports this week that multiple sailors had attempted to jump overboard from the USS Abraham Lincoln amid grueling deployment conditions for the ship’s 5,000-person crew.
- **Traffic through Hormuz seems to grind to a halt:** West-to-east tanker traffic through the Strait of Hormuz has collapsed after a brief burst of outbound flows, according to data published by Kpler on Thursday.
 - From August 7 through 13, 19 tankers carried 16.7 million barrels out of the Gulf. Nearly all of that moved during the first four days with 16 tankers carrying 16.3 million barrels.

- From August 11 through 13, just three Iran-linked tankers crossed, carrying only 0.4 million barrels combined.

· **U.S. threatens economic punishment for Iran that has “never been seen” as Hegseth vows indefinite blockade:** U.S. Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent [threatened](#) to impose measures on Iran that have “never been seen in the history of economic isolation on a country,” during a Thursday interview on Newsmax.

- Bessent described the plan as a “combination of economic isolation” and “the continued blockade in the Strait of Hormuz” of Iranian ports.

- Separately, U.S. War Secretary Pete Hegseth said the U.S. can [maintain](#) its naval blockade of Iranian ports “indefinitely” on Thursday, as the standoff over the Strait of Hormuz drags on.

- Hegseth told reporters in Panama that the U.S. could “rotate ships in and out” to keep up the embargo. “We’ll hold it as long as we need to,” he said.

· **U.S. has lost 45 MQ-9 Reaper drones, roughly 25% of fleet, in Iran war:** The U.S. military has [lost](#) at least 45 MQ-9 Reaper drones during its war with Iran, representing about a quarter of the pre-war fleet and a potential taxpayer cost exceeding \$1.3 billion, according to three officials cited by The Washington Post on Friday.

- The losses add to a broader depletion of U.S. munitions, including more than 850 Tomahawk cruise missiles and over 1,000 Patriot and THAAD missiles fired in the campaign’s first month.

- The Trump administration is seeking a \$67 billion supplemental budget from the U.S. Senate to restock the arsenal.

- Iranian forces intercepted and destroyed an MQ9-Reaper drone over Hormozgan province on Friday, according to Iranian state TV.

· **Drones intercepted over Iraqi Kurdistan:** Iraqi air defense systems [intercepted](#) drones over the northern Kurdish province of Erbil early Thursday, Iraqi security sources told Al Jazeera.

- Local media footage showed the remnants of the drones falling onto a residential area near Erbil International Airport. No casualties were reported.

- It was not immediately clear where the drones were launched from or what their intended target was. Erbil, the capital of Iraq’s semi-autonomous Kurdistan region, hosts U.S. forces and has been struck repeatedly by Iran.

- **Iraqi state oil company says UAE firm is buying its crude:** Iraq's state oil marketing company SOMO [confirmed](#) Wednesday that Abu Dhabi's ADNOC is among the firms buying its crude and now helping transport Iraqi crude through the Strait of Hormuz, following a Bloomberg report that ADNOC's trading arm offered Iraq to use its "dark-transit" shuttle system.

- Under the arrangement, tankers make short crossings with their tracking systems switched off, then transfer the crude to other vessels outside the Persian Gulf. The strategy has helped maintain exports through the blockaded Strait.

Yemen

- **Ansarallah says it struck Saudi Aramco facility:** Yemen's Ansarallah movement [announced](#) operations against Saudi Arabia and around the Bab Al-Mandab on Thursday as fighting continued in the city of Taiz in southwestern Yemen, with a military source telling the Yemeni outlet Saba that two drones struck an Aramco facility in Jizan. This follows two previous attacks claimed by Ansarallah on the same facility in late July and August.

- The source said the operation answered Saudi violations of Yemeni airspace and sovereignty in Saada and Hajjah and warned of further retaliation.

- Saba separately reported that Ansarallah targeted the Bab Al-Mandab area with two missiles. Details were not immediately available.

- In Taiz, a shell fired by Saudi-backed forces struck the wholesale fish market in Salah district, causing extensive property damage. No casualties were reported.

- **Iran rejects U.S. claims that flights to Yemen carry military personnel or equipment:**

Iran [rejected](#) U.S. allegations that Iranian commercial flights to Sana'a are transporting military personnel or equipment in violation of UN Security Council Resolution 2216, calling the claims "completely baseless" and unsupported by evidence, Iran's Mehr News Agency reported.

- In a letter to UN Secretary-General António Guterres and the Security Council president, the Iranian envoy claimed recent Iranian flights to Yemen were "humanitarian in nature" and accused Washington of trying to "distort the facts" and divert attention from its own military actions and support for the blockade of Yemen.

Palestine

- **Israel attacks fishermen off Gaza coast:** Israeli naval boats [opened fire](#) on a fishing boat west of Gaza City on Friday, according to WAFA, injuring three fishermen.
- **Israel continues its assault on the occupied West Bank:**
 - **Nablus:** Israeli forces [blocked](#) Israeli and foreign aid groups trying to access three homes in Nablus town of Qusra. The homes have been under siege by settlers for nearly a week, according to WAFA, who are also preventing families from accessing basic necessities during the assault. (Israeli anti-occupation Knesset member Ofer Cassif [said](#) he used his parliamentary immunity to cross an Israeli police blockade and deliver some water, food and medicine to the families. Cassif also said he brought equipment to restore their water supply, which had been cut by “settler terrorists.”) Separately, in the city of Nablus, Israeli forces [detained](#) four Palestinians during a Friday morning raid, ransacking several homes. Israeli forces also expelled Palestinian families at gunpoint on Thursday and seized three newly built, multi-story homes in Jalud, south of Nablus, converting them into military posts and watchtowers, Haaretz [reported](#).
 - **Hebron:** Israeli forces [detained](#) a 14-year-old in the village of Al-Kum, WAFA reported on Friday. On Thursday evening, Israeli settlers attacked Palestinian homes in Al-Buweira with stones and fired live ammunition toward them, and then raided the area, detaining dozens in the process.
 - **Jenin:** Israeli settlers wearing military uniforms [assaulted](#) a Palestinian crew from an electrical utility on Friday, briefly detaining two and seizing money from one of them, WAFA reported. Israeli settlers [attacked](#) a vehicle between the towns of Arraba and Ya’bad on Thursday evening, using pepper spray and wounding three of the vehicle’s passengers, including a child.
 - **Ramallah:** Israeli settlers [damaged](#) Palestinian property between the villages of Al-Mughayyir and Abu Falah on Friday, dismantling water tanks. Israeli settlers also [began](#) to establish a new colonial outpost near the Palestinian towns of Silwad and Deir Jarir on Friday, setting up a tent on land owned by the former town.
- **Katz orders transfer of West Bank enforcement powers; Palestinian commission says move advances annexation:** Israeli Defense Minister Israel Katz [ordered](#) the military to prepare a plan to transfer enforcement powers over Israeli settlers in the occupied West Bank to the Israel Police, saying the military should not “chase youth in the hilltops” and citing an

“expected welcome increase in the number of settlers” following the government’s approval of new settlements.

- The directive, which has not yet taken effect, **represents** an advanced step in Israel’s “administrative and legal annexation” of the occupied West Bank by further shifting authority from the military administration to Israeli civilian institutions, treating settlers increasingly as though they were inside Israel while Palestinians remain subject to military rule, the Palestinian Colonization and Wall Resistance Commission said.

- Palestinian Authority Vice President Hussein al-Sheikh condemned the move, saying it “represents a new attempt to impose Israeli law and sovereignty over the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and to entrench the unlawful annexation of Palestinian territory.”

- **Israel blockade on oil and spare parts from entering Gaza endangers thousands, MSF says:** Israel is **placing** thousands of Palestinians in Gaza at heightened risk of death and severe illness as hospital generators, ambulances, water pumps, and water trucks begin to fail, the medical charity Doctors Without Borders (MSF) said.

- MSF noted the rising costs of engine oil, which can exceed \$1,300 per liter, 20 times its price six months ago.

- It also highlighted the risks electricity rationing posed to hospital operations and water access. A damaged generator, for example, forced MSF to cut daily water production from 600,000 to 350,000 liters, depriving more than 40,000 people of water each day.

- “This is not bureaucracy,” said the group’s Filipe Ribeiro. “It is a deliberate effort to make existence itself impossible.”

- **Gaza cancer patients dying at 2-3 times prewar rate, Reuters reports:** Gaza cancer patients are **dying** at two to three times the prewar rate after Israel destroyed the enclave’s only specialized cancer hospital and blocked thousands from leaving for treatment, Reuters reported on Thursday.

- An estimated 17,000 cancer patients now have no access to chemotherapy or advanced care inside Gaza. Another 20,000 patients are registered for treatment abroad, including 5,000 with cancer, but have not been permitted to leave.

- Doctors report three to five cancer deaths daily, up from one to two before the war. Gaza’s remaining hospitals lack up to 70% of essential medical supplies, while

specialists warn toxic materials from Israeli explosives may be accelerating cancer rates.

- “Every day my disease progresses,” said a 33-year-old woman with cancer. “I am just waiting to die.”

- **Kushner to visit Israel next week:** Jared Kushner, President Trump’s son-in-law and Board of Peace member, [plans](#) to visit Israel next week for talks on Gaza, Axios reported.

- The visit is reportedly set to focus on advancing the Board of Peace’s plan. Netanyahu said Israel “rejects” Trump’s 15-point roadmap, which would include Hamas disarmament and a phased Israeli withdrawal.

- A U.S. official told Axios the two sides “see eye-to-eye on the strategic goal, but Israel has expressed some doubts about the plan.”

Lebanon

- **Israel continues military activity in Lebanon despite “ceasefire”:** Israeli forces carried out a series of attacks across southern Lebanon on Thursday and Friday, according to Lebanon’s National News Agency.

- Israeli forces [carried out](#) two explosions in Bint Jbeil and Kounine in Bint Jbeil district and a large explosion in Markaba in Marjayoun district. Forces also bulldozed homes in Bani Hayyan in Marjayoun district, where fires broke out amid continued shelling.

- Israeli warplanes and drones meanwhile repeatedly [struck](#) the outskirts of Mansouri and Majdal Zoun in Tyre (Sour) district, alongside demolition operations in the al-Mashaa neighborhood east of Mansouri.

- On Thursday, the Israeli army [carried out](#) detonations and demolitions in Taybeh, Aita Al-Jabal, and Bani Hayyan, according to L’orient Today. Israeli Merkava tanks were also seen moving near the eastern outskirts of Kfar Shuba.

- **Israel demolished a 60-apartment complex in Lebanon, official says:** Ten days ago, Israeli forces [demolished](#) a residential complex of around 60 apartments in Kfar Tibnit, in Lebanon’s Nabatieh region, the town’s mukhtar told L’Orient Today.

- The mukhtar said “one of the major demolitions” targeted the Ward complex, made up of 14 buildings. “The complex was completely destroyed,” he said. Several other homes were similarly targeted.

- **HRW urges UN to keep international force in southern Lebanon beyond 2026:** Human Rights Watch [called on](#) the UN Security Council Thursday to delay UNIFIL's planned withdrawal from southern Lebanon and ensure a robust international force remains to protect civilians. The Security Council voted in August 2025 to extend UNIFIL's mandate for a final time through 2026, before the latest war erupted in March and Israeli forces displaced hundreds of thousands of people and occupied large areas of southern Lebanon.

- HRW said the security situation has since "dramatically worsened," with Israeli attacks killing more than 4,333 people and wounding over 12,250 since March 2, according to Lebanon's Health Ministry.
- "Pulling the plug on UNIFIL without a robust international force in place would effectively abandon millions of Lebanese civilians to an uncertain and potentially disastrous fate," HRW's UN director said.

U.S. News

- **Flock Safety announces mandatory audit changes amid mounting scrutiny over misuse:** Flock Safety, whose network of automated license plate cameras is used by law enforcement agencies in 49 states, [announced](#) Thursday it will require customers to implement an audit tool flagging abnormal searches, shorten its data retention from 30 to seven days, and mandate that officers enter a case number before running searches.

- A Washington Post investigation earlier this month found nearly 50 instances of officers charged or accused of misusing the cameras, often to track romantic partners or family members.
- Six employees of the Savannah, Georgia police department were fired earlier this week for searching for friends and family using Flock technology.
- More than 50 agencies nationwide have canceled or suspended Flock contracts since the start of the year, according to tracking group DeFlock.

- **DHS documents show broad surveillance of left-leaning groups during Minnesota immigration crackdown:** The Department of Homeland Security [opened](#) an investigation into labor unions, climate groups, and progressive organizations during the Trump administration's immigration crackdown in Minnesota earlier this year. Homeland Security launched the investigation days after Border Patrol agents fatally shot nurse **Alex Pretti** in January, using administrative subpoenas to obtain years of financial records from the groups, according to the New York Times.

- Homeland Security obtained financial records of a number of non profits and prominent unions, including the Sunrise Movement, the Communications Workers of America, and the Service Employees International Union.
- Documents reviewed by the Times also detail an undercover surveillance operation in which agents infiltrated Signal group chats and took names and license plate numbers of people at meetings in churches, libraries, and parks.
- Prosecutors ultimately indicted 15 people connected to the “antifa” in June after presenting grand jurors with a slide claiming 18 groups, including the AFL-CIO, were part of a conspiracy to obstruct immigration agents.
- **Homan defends ICE plan to equip officers with electric shock gloves:** White House border czar **Tom Homan** [defended](#) Immigration and Customs Enforcement’s plan to spend up to \$20 million on electric shock gloves for officers, telling Fox News a de-escalation tool that could help avoid deadly force.
 - The gloves, known as G.L.O.V.E. and manufactured by Compliant Technologies LLC, have drawn criticism from civil rights groups and Democrats amid concerns that ICE agents have been too quick to use force, with at least six people shot and killed by immigration agents since last year, including motorists in Maine and Texas last month.
 - Homan said deployment of the devices would take “awhile” as the agency works out training protocols.
- **Trump signs proclamations imposing drone tariffs, allowing limited foreign warship construction:** President Donald Trump [signed](#) two proclamations Thursday, one imposing tariffs on drones and drone parts and another directing the Navy to allow limited foreign shipbuilding.
 - The drone memorandum sets a 100% tariff on “particularly sensitive” drones and 25% on smaller, less security-sensitive models, alongside a 15% tariff on drones from the European Union, Japan, and several other countries, taking effect 21 days after signing, with tariffs on less sensitive components phased in after 180 days.
 - The Navy directive orders War Secretary **Pete Hegseth** to replace the Advanced Electromagnetic Aircraft Launch Systems with traditional steam and hydraulic systems, establish a fifth naval shipyard, and temporarily permit foreign shipbuilders to construct up to two American warships in their own shipyards as part of efforts to accelerate production.

- **Vance asks DOJ to investigate hospitals over transgender care:** Vice President **JD Vance** [sent](#) the Justice Department a government report accusing hospitals of using misleading billing codes for transgender health procedures to secure insurance reimbursement, asking Attorney General **Todd Blanche** to investigate dozens of hospitals nationwide, according to Politico.

- The report from the Department of Health and Human Services, titled “Wolves in White Coats,” found that providers billed nearly \$50 million for puberty-blocking drugs for patients ages 9 to 17 using endocrine disorder diagnosis codes rather than gender-related ones. The report was released two days after the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services cut off Medicaid funding for gender-affirming care for minors.

- Major medical groups including the American Medical Association and American Academy of Pediatrics support gender-affirming care and have criticized the administration’s actions, with AAP President Susan J. Kressly warning that “allowing the government to determine which patient groups deserve care sets a dangerous precedent.”

- **DOJ finds California prisons systematically fail to protect women from guard sexual abuse:** The Justice Department [found](#) that California’s prison system has systematically failed to protect incarcerated women from sexual abuse and harassment by guards, with staff tasked with investigating misconduct often themselves accused of abuse.

- **Federal judge dismisses Trump administration’s antisemitism lawsuit against Harvard:** Judge **Richard G. Stearns** of the U.S. District Court in Massachusetts [dismissed](#) the Trump administration’s antisemitism lawsuit against Harvard University Thursday, ruling that the antisemitic incidents cited in the March lawsuit were “too isolated and episodic” to show the school violated Title VI of the Civil Rights Act.

- The lawsuit had accused Harvard of turning “a blind eye to antisemitism and discrimination against Jews and Israelis” following pro-Palestinian campus protests after the Gaza war began in 2023.

- **Progressive Florida slate rally moves to church after venue tried to bar Rashida Tlaib:** A Friday “Chomp the Oligarchy” rally for a slate of progressive Florida candidates in the Fort Lauderdale area was [relocated](#) to a church after its original venue canceled the original booking unless organizers agreed to bar **Rep. Rashida Tlaib** from speaking, a campaign spokesperson told Drop Site’s Ryan Grim.

- The rally, organized with the Florida Youth Justice Coalition, Gen-Z for Change, and Miami DSA, features Tlaib and Senate candidate **Angie Nixon**, alongside congressional candidates **Elijah Manley** (FL-20) and **Oliver Larkin** (FL-25) and Colorado Democratic congressional nominee **Melat Kiros**.

 Have a tip on Capitol Hill? Email DC Correspondent Julian Andreone at Julian@dropsitenews.com

Other International News

- **CIA behind Ecuadorian fishing attacks, WaPo reports:** The CIA was behind the April attacks on three Ecuadorian fishing boats near the Galápagos Islands, first [reported](#) on by Drop Site contributor Camila Lourdes Galarza, according to a new investigation from the Washington Post.

- Last month, Galarza first [reported](#) for Drop Site that the Ecuadorian prosecutor assigned to investigate the attacks and 36 survivors' allegations of kidnapping and torture by U.S. personnel, told a colleague she was facing internal pressure and institutional stonewalling that was preventing her from pursuing potential U.S. involvement. She was assassinated on June 14.

- **Russia rejects Black Sea ceasefire proposal:** Russia [rejected](#) a proposal for a ceasefire on cargo shipping in the Black Sea amid intensifying attacks in recent weeks that have increased global grain prices.

- Russian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Maria Zakharova called it a “deliberate policy aimed at destabilizing civilian shipping in the Black Sea,” as a result of Ukrainian attacks on Russian ships in the region and rejected the idea of returning to a previous 2022-2023 ceasefire on ships carrying grain.

- The rejection comes after Turkey had floated proposals to both sides for a halt to military operations at sea. Reuters also reported that Ukraine separately transmitted an offer through a third party to stop attacks on civilian targets.

- **UN warns that 650,000 refugees in South Sudan could lose food aid:** UN agencies [warned](#) that more than 650,000 refugees and asylum seekers in South Sudan could lose access to food assistance within weeks because of a severe funding shortfall, with the World Food Programme (WFP) saying no refugees may be receiving food aid by October unless new money is secured.

- The warning comes as South Sudan faces one of the world's worst hunger crises, with 7.8 million people experiencing acute food insecurity and 2.2 million children acutely malnourished.

- The WFP says it needs \$37 million for refugee operations to avoid ceasing aid to 180,000 internally displaced people by October and hundreds of thousands more by this winter.

- **Chadian president pardons jailed opposition leaders:** Chadian President Mahamat Idriss Deby [pardoned](#) former prime minister and main opposition leader Succes Masra, along with eight other opposition figures, ending prison terms that critics had denounced as politically motivated.

- **RSF confirms Kurmuk capture as fighting escalates across Sudan:** The UAE-backed RSF said it seized [Kurmuk](#), the strategic Blue Nile border town on Thursday, with regional monitors reporting Ethiopian support for the operation. Clashes continued there and in Amburu, North Darfur. In North Kordofan, the army said it repelled an RSF assault involving more than 250 combat vehicles on Jabra al-Sheikh, while two civilians were killed in RSF drone strikes on El Obeid, according to Emergency Lawyers. RSF drone attacks were also reported on Khartoum and Omdurman for a second consecutive day.

- **Hundreds across Canada target Elbit suppliers in “people’s arms embargo”:** Activists with Arms Embargo Now picketed facilities from British Columbia to Newfoundland on Thursday, targeting more than 40 companies tied to Israeli arms manufacturer Elbit Systems, including Ontario-based TTM Technologies, which has shipped millions of dollars in circuit boards for precision-strike munitions. The campaign has already pushed Montreal-based Apollo Microwaves to end its Elbit contracts and Scotiabank, once Elbit's largest foreign shareholder, to divest its roughly \$500 million stake. Report from Christopher Ketchum is [here](#).