

**Israeli cabinet deepens annexation of West Bank; Cuba is running out of jet fuel; Bad Bunny vs. Trump**

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[DROP SITE NEWS](#)

## The Gaza Genocide, West Bank, and Israel

- **Casualty counts:** At least five Palestinians were killed and ten injured in Israeli attacks in Gaza over the past 24 hours. The total recorded death toll since October 7, 2023 has risen to 72,032 killed, with 171,661 injured. Since October 11, the first full day of the so-called ceasefire, Israel has killed at least 581 Palestinians in Gaza and wounded 1,553, while 717 bodies have been recovered from under the rubble, according to the Palestinian Ministry of Health.
- **Six Palestinians killed over the weekend as Israeli attacks continue across Gaza:** Israeli forces [killed](#) at least six Palestinians over the weekend in separate incidents across the Gaza Strip, according to Palestinian health officials and local media, including two Palestinians in southern Gaza who succumbed to earlier injuries, one person in central Gaza, and three in northern Gaza. Ongoing Israel attacks included Israeli warships opening fire at sea off Khan Younis, artillery shelling in Beit Lahia in the north, and Israeli military vehicles advancing near Siyam Street in Zaytoun Neighbourhood. Health authorities said that dozens of previously undocumented victims continue to be added to official records as verification is completed, with 174 deaths recently added to the cumulative death toll on Saturday.
- **Child casualties rise as Gaza's school system is nearly erased:** At least 37 Palestinian children have been killed in the Gaza Strip since the start of 2026, according to UNICEF. The organization added that an estimated 90 percent of schools have been damaged or destroyed, leaving more than 700,000 children without regular access to education. This announcement follows a UN report on Thursday that Israeli forces recently demolished the UNRWA Jabalya Preparatory Boys' School. The Jabalya Boys' School was the last remaining school in a six-building complex.
- **Israel claims it killed four fighters exiting a tunnel in Rafah:** The Israeli military reported killing four Palestinian resistance fighters it claimed attacked Israeli troops as they

emerged from a tunnel in southern Gaza's Rafah area, describing the incident as a “blatant ceasefire violation.” No Israeli soldiers were reported injured.

- **Israel approves measures accelerating de facto annexation in the occupied West Bank:** Israel’s security cabinet [approved](#) a sweeping set of measures on Sunday aimed at entrenching Israeli control across the occupied West Bank and paving the way for further settler expansion. Israeli finance minister Bezalel Smotrich, who has long called for Israel to annex the territory, said the government was “burying the idea of a Palestinian state.” The measures include repealing restrictions on land sales to Israeli settlers, publishing land registries, reviving a state land acquisition committee to expand settlements, extending Israeli enforcement into Palestinian-administered Areas A and B, shifting authority in Hebron settlements to the Civil Administration, and creating a special municipal body to oversee Rachel’s Tomb in Bethlehem.
- **Palestine requests urgent Arab League meeting in response:** Palestinian authorities have [submitted](#) an urgent request to the Arab League for an extraordinary session to address Israel’s recent measures in the occupied West Bank. Hamas said the Israeli cabinet’s decisions reflect a “fascist settler-colonial approach” and form part of a “comprehensive annexation plan” designed to change “geographical and legal facts on the ground” alongside a “genocidal war and ethnic cleansing.” Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas also strongly condemned the moves, saying they “reflect an open Israeli attempt to legalize settlement expansion, land confiscation, and the demolition of Palestinian properties,” and called on the international community, particularly the UN Security Council and the U.S., to “intervene immediately and take decisive action to halt these dangerous Israeli decisions.”
- **Widespread condemnation:** Foreign ministers from Saudi Arabia, Jordan, the UAE, Qatar, Indonesia, Pakistan, Egypt, and Turkey issued a joint [statement](#) condemning Israel’s measures as “illegal” and aimed at accelerating “annexation and the displacement of the Palestinian people.” They reaffirmed that “Israel has no sovereignty over the occupied Palestinian territory” and warned that its expansionist policies “fuel violence and conflict in the region,” violate international law, and undermine the two-state solution.
- **West Bank arrests:** The Israeli military arrested at least 20 Palestinians across the occupied West Bank over the past 24 hours, including two children, according to the Wafa news agency. The arrests took place in various governorates, including Nablus, Ramallah, Hebron and Jenin.
- **Netanyahu adjusts Washington trip to talk Iran with Trump:** Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has reportedly [moved](#) up his Washington visit and intends to meet President Donald Trump on Wednesday for urgent discussions on United States–Iran

negotiations. On Friday, Trump said Washington's core demand is preventing Iran from developing nuclear weapons and signaled that resolving the nuclear file alone would be sufficient. Netanyahu has demanded that any U.S.-Iran agreement must include limits on Iran's ballistic missiles and an end to Iranian support for allied regional forces, according to Axios. This will mark the seventh meeting between Trump and Israel's leader since January 2025.

- **Hamas leader discusses disarmament, long-term truce, and Israeli threat:** Hamas's political leader abroad, Khaled Meshaal, [said](#) Sunday at the Al Jazeera Forum in Doha that demands for Palestinian disarmament are an Israeli dictate pushed onto Washington. Meshaal said Hamas has pursued a long-term truce framework, proposing a ceasefire of "five, seven, up to ten years" with guarantees including international forces on Gaza's borders and oversight by regional mediators, while resistance weapons would "not be used and not displayed." He pointed to Israel's role as a regional threat, targeting not only Palestinians but also Syria, Jordan, Egypt, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, and Qatar, while promoting instability and fragmentation. Meshaal called for Israel to be stripped of legitimacy "exactly like the apartheid system in South Africa."

## U.S. News

- **Bad Bunny vs. Trump:** Puerto Rican star Benito Antonio Martínez Ocasio, better known as Bad Bunny, on Sunday became the first artist to perform a Super Bowl halftime show almost entirely in Spanish. His album, *Debí Tirar Más Fotos*, was the first Spanish-language album to win the Grammy for album of the year. During his Grammy acceptance speech, Bad Bunny criticized ICE. In the Super Bowl halftime performance, Bad Bunny shouted "God bless America!" near the end of the show as he held up a light blue pro-Independence variation of the Puerto Rican flag and went on to list all the countries of North, South and Central America. In response, President Trump [posted](#): "The Super Bowl Halftime Show is absolutely terrible, one of the worst, EVER! It makes no sense, is an affront to the Greatness of America, and doesn't represent our standards of Success, Creativity, or Excellence. Nobody understands a word this guy is saying."
- **Trump "very proud" of U.S. economy:** In an interview aired in conjunction with the Super Bowl, President Trump finally took ownership of the economy. Trump claimed the economy is doing so well that Democrats have even stopped discussing "affordability," which he has previously referred to as a hoax. "In the last four days—it's only four days—the Democrats have not uttered the word 'affordability,'" he said. "They're the ones that caused the problem. I took over a mess in every way."

- **Minnesota man severely injured in unlawful ICE arrest:** Alberto Castañeda Mondragón, a 31-year-old who immigrated from Mexico, [said](#) he was beaten by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents during his January 8 arrest in St. Paul, Minnesota. Mondragón described being pulled from a car, struck in the head with a metal baton, and beaten again at a detention facility. As a result of these attacks, Mondragón suffered eight skull fractures and five life-threatening brain hemorrhages. Medical professionals confirmed his account, saying his injuries are inconsistent with the agency's claim that he "ran into a wall." A federal judge later ruled that Mondragón's detention was unlawful, and Minnesota officials, including Governor Tim Walz and St. Paul's mayor, condemned ICE's use of excessive force in this case and called for an independent investigation.
- **Protesters arrested:** Local [police arrested](#) at least 50 people outside a federal building in Minneapolis on Saturday as they were marking the one-month anniversary of Renee Good's fatal shooting by an ICE officer.
- **Family says detained activist Leqaa Kordia's location unknown after medical emergency in ICE custody:** The family and legal team of Kordia, a Palestinian resident of Paterson, New Jersey, [said](#) ICE reported she had been hospitalized following a reported seizure and head injury at the Prairieland Detention Center in North Texas. As of Sunday, her whereabouts and condition remain unknown. Kordia has been held by immigration officials for nearly a year after being detained at a routine check-in. The arrest came after her participation in 2024 protests at Columbia University; despite an immigration judge twice ordering her release on bond, ICE has utilized "automatic stays" to keep her detained.
- **Members of Congress to begin viewing unredacted Epstein files:** GOP Rep. Thomas Massie, whom Trump is trying to take out in Kentucky, [invited the public to point him toward](#) particular files he should review privately. Ghislaine Maxwell met virtually on Monday with congressional investigators [and took the Fifth](#).
- **DHS used Google data demand to track man who emailed prosecutor about an asylum case:** The United States Department of Homeland Security [issued](#) an administrative subpoena to Google seeking extensive personal data on a 67-year-old retiree who had emailed a DHS attorney urging mercy for an Afghan asylum seeker, according to reporting by The Washington Post. The subpoena required no judge's approval or probable cause and triggered a home visit by DHS agents. Lawyers from the ACLU warn that the administrative subpoena process is ripe for abuse and could easily be used to intimidate government critics.
- **AIPAC is quietly funneling donor networks and shell super PACs into key Democratic primaries:** AIPAC is now employing a stealth strategy of bankrolling preferred Democratic

candidates through coordinated donor networks and newly created super PACs that obscure its involvement, according to a recent investigation from Drop Site News and The American Prospect. Campaign finance filings in several Illinois House primaries show hundreds of donors previously tied to AIPAC and its affiliate the United Democracy Project, delivering synchronized donations to candidates. Similarly, pop-up super PACs with generic names have run million-dollar ad campaigns in the race, a tactic that mirrors one deployed by the group in Oregon's 2024 race, that ultimately concealed its role until after the election. **The full report, co-authored by David Dayen of The American Prospect and our own Ryan Grim, is available here.**

- **Epstein emails point to meeting with Mohammed bin Salman days before Khashoggi killing:** Emails from the inbox of Jeffrey Epstein [indicate](#) that he coordinated a meeting with Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman just three days before the murder of journalist Jamal Khashoggi on October 2, 2018. The emails, coming from an archive of recent DOJ disclosures of Epstein's communications, show Epstein corresponding about a meeting held on September 30 of that year with MBS, sharing comments about it with Anas al-Rasheed—a Kuwaiti academic and former cabinet minister, before referring al-Rasheed to his associate Terje Rod-Larsen for further information. You can read more about Epstein's ties to [Gulf elites](#) and political [dealings with Rod-Larsen](#) in Drop Site's ongoing series on his intelligence activities.

## International News

- **Cuba warns airlines of imminent jet fuel depletion as U.S. energy pressure tightens:** Cuba [alerted](#) international carriers that it will run out of jet fuel within 24 hours, according to EFE, with Jet A1 fuel unavailable at all of the country's international airports from February 10 through March 11. Airlines may be forced to reroute, add foreign refueling stops, or cancel flights. Officials linked the shortage to intensified U.S. pressure on energy supplies, including new measures targeting countries that provide oil to the island after Washington cut off Venezuelan exports. **Ryan Grim comprehensively outlined the severe constraints on Cuba's fuel over the weekend; his summary of the situation is available [here](#).**
- **Support fractures inside Venezuela's ruling party after Nicolás Maduro's capture, report claims:** A recent [report](#) from Reuters claims that backing for the ruling United Socialist Party of Venezuela has sharply eroded in multiple regions following the U.S. capture of President Nicolás Maduro. Unnamed party members tell Reuters that participation in party affairs has collapsed, patronage payments have stalled, and distrust of interim President Delcy Rodríguez is spreading. Sources also described plunging attendance at party events, the

breakdown of welfare distribution that long sustained loyalty, and growing fear of retaliation, with local leaders pushing members to inform on dissenters. The full report is available [here](#).

- **U.S. military ammunition tied to cartel firepower in Mexico:** Mexican cartels obtained .50-caliber ammunition manufactured at the Lake City Army Ammunition Plant and used it in attacks on police and civilians, according to a joint investigation by the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists and The New York Times. A third of the 40,000 ammunition rounds seized in security operations since 2012 can be traced back to the Army-owned plant, which began selling the ammunition commercially in 2008. Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum has previously argued that U.S.-made weapons being trafficked southwards are a core driver of cartel violence, accusations which have prompted new bilateral enforcement efforts between Mexico and its northern neighbor.
- **Epstein files push Keir Starmer's UK government to the brink:** Longtime Starmer chief of staff Morgan McSweeney resigned under pressure, more fallout from the scandal exposed in the Epstein files involving former British politician [Peter Mandelson](#), a close McSweeney ally who leaked details of an EU bailout to Epstein. [Drop Site](#) previously reported on McSweeney's role in the destruction of opposition media in the UK, part of his effort to undermine Jeremy Corbyn. Starmer himself could fall next.
- **Russian drone and missile barrage knocks out power across Ukraine:** Russian overnight strikes on Sunday killed at least four people across Ukraine, including a mother and her 10-year-old son in Bohodukhiv in the Kharkiv region, according to reporting from [Reuters](#). Moscow launched 149 drones and 11 ballistic missiles into the country, Ukrainian officials said, though the Ukrainian Air Force reported that most of these drones were intercepted. Additional attacks hit the southern port city of Odesa, the northern Chernihiv region, and energy infrastructure in western Volyn, cutting electricity to more than 80,000 people.
- **Patriot missile shortages strain Ukraine's air defense:** Ukraine's air force says a lack of PAC-3 interceptor missiles has left some Patriot launchers empty at critical moments, according to a report in [the Financial Times](#) citing comments from Ukrainian military officials. Ukraine has warned that ammunition is being expended faster than partners can resupply it, forcing air defense crews to stand down even as Russian attacks continue. The shortage has forced many recent strikes on Ukrainian power plants to go unopposed.
- **Dozens dead or missing after migrant boat capsizes off Libya's coast:** At least 53 people, including two babies, were reported dead or missing after a boat carrying 55 migrants overturned north of the coastal city of Zuwara in northwestern Libya on Friday, according to the International Organization for Migration. The UN agency said only two survivors were

rescued from the boat. More than 1,300 people went missing and are presumed drowned in similar incidents in the central Mediterranean route in 2025.

- **Algeria moves to suspend air links as relations with the United Arab Emirates deteriorate:**

Algeria [said](#) on Friday that it has begun steps to cancel its commercial air services agreement with the United Arab Emirates, a move that would allow Algiers to restrict or suspend direct flights until a new framework is negotiated. The decision follows earlier remarks by President Abdelmadjid Tebboune, which accused an unnamed Gulf state (widely understood to be the UAE) of interfering in Algeria's internal affairs. Abu Dhabi allegedly backed the separatist Movement for the Autonomy of Kabylia, which Algeria designates as a terrorist organization. Algerian officials and regional media have also pointed to the UAE's involvement in conflicts across Libya, Yemen, and Sudan, as well as its alignment with Morocco and Israel, as violating long-standing norms of regional non-interference.

- **Ethiopia demands Eritrean troop withdrawal, warning of dangerous escalation:**

Ethiopia formally [accused](#) Eritrea of crossing into its territory and engaging in "outright aggression." Ethiopia accused its neighbor specifically of conducting joint maneuvers with Ethiopian rebel groups and supplying them with weapons, according to a letter sent by Foreign Minister Gedion Timothewos and reported by the BBC. Addis Ababa said talks, including on sea access through Eritrea's Assab port, could follow an Eritrean withdrawal. Officials warned that the developments risk triggering a renewed war between the two countries.

- **Mass graves discovered on Sudan university campus used by RSF during fighting:**

More than 1,000 bodies were [buried](#) in individual and mass graves on land belonging to the Sudan University of Science and Technology, according to the Sudan Tribune. The RSF allegedly used a campus site designated for a hospital as a burial ground, a university official told the paper. The university estimates that it lost property of a value up to \$258 million during the war, a valuation which includes the destruction of all 300 of its laboratories (among them a rare nuclear chemistry lab) and widespread looting of its medical equipment, libraries, power infrastructure, and campus facilities.

- **RSF siege of El-Obeid drives mass displacement and deepening humanitarian collapse in Sudan:**

Families fleeing fighting between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces are pouring into El-Obeid after their homes were destroyed and supply routes were cut, with drone strikes intensifying around the city and humanitarian conditions rapidly deteriorating. Aid groups, including Plan International Sudan, say newly displaced families are sleeping outdoors without food or medical care; El-Obeid Teaching Hospital, for example, faces critical shortages of electricity, oxygen, fuel, and medicine. "We live without food,

without medicine, without tents, without bathrooms — the diarrhea and malnutrition are hitting children and women the hardest,” said displaced farmer Abu Bakr Muhammad. **Read the collaborative report on the state of affairs in El-Obeid from Drop Site News and Egab here.**

- **Congolese army retakes key South Kivu towns from M23 after two days of fighting:** The army of the Democratic Republic of the Congo [said](#) it killed more than 30 fighters from the M23 and recaptured strategic territory in South Kivu, including the towns of Minembwe, Fizi, Uvira, and Mwenga, after months of rebel control in the province. Officials warned the situation remains fragile despite the gains, as humanitarian groups say fighting in the region displaced more than 500,000 people in 2025.
- **Gunmen kill security personnel and abduct priest in Kaduna church raid:** Armed attackers [abducted](#) a Catholic priest and several others in a pre-dawn assault on a church residence in the Kauru district of Nigeria’s Kaduna State and killed three members of the security forces during a firefight, according to church officials and police. The attack came days after mass church abductions elsewhere in Kaduna and amid growing international scrutiny of unrest in the country.
- **Israeli strikes across southern Lebanon kill four people, including a three-year-old child:** An Israeli drone strike on a vehicle in Yanouh killed three people, including a three-year-old child, according to Lebanon’s [National News Agency](#). After the strike, the Israeli army claimed it had killed Ahmad Ali Salami, whom it described as a Hezbollah artillery commander, and expressed “regret” for any civilian harm, adding that the incident is “under review.” In Bint Jbeil district, Israeli gunfire reportedly wounded a municipal employee, killed a man, and injured others. Meanwhile, the Arkoub Regional Residents’ Association condemned Israel’s abduction of Islamic party official Atweh Atweh, calling it a grave violation of Lebanese sovereignty.
- **Iran adds years to the prison term of Nobel laureate Narges Mohammadi:** Iranian authorities [sentenced](#) Narges Mohammadi to more than seven additional years in prison after she launched a hunger strike on February 2, with the Revolutionary Court in Mashhad imposing six years for “gathering and collusion” and 18 months for propaganda, alongside a two-year travel ban, her lawyer told reporters on Saturday. Mohammadi, a leading women’s rights advocate and vice president of the Defenders of Human Rights Center, has been repeatedly jailed over the past decade for opposing compulsory hijab laws, documenting prison abuses in the country, and criticizing state repression, and was rearrested in December after a brief medical furlough.

- **Turkey arrests alleged Israeli spy cell targeting Palestinians and supply chains:**

Turkey [dismantled](#) what officials described as an Israeli intelligence cell, which is accused of surveilling Palestinian targets and attempting to infiltrate commercial supply chains, according to Turkish security sources [cited by Middle East Eye](#). In a joint operation last month, Turkish intelligence and Istanbul police arrested two Turkish citizens in the case, one of whom is accused of working for Israeli intelligence since 2012. Authorities say the accused ran shell companies, gathered intelligence across Turkey and the Middle East, sought to export drone parts, and planned front firms to manipulate supply chains as part of a long-running scheme. Observers have commented that the cell's operations resemble the operations used in Israel's pager attack in Lebanon in 2024.

- **Taiwan rejects U.S. pressure on reshoring semiconductor chip manufacturing:** In

response to U.S. demands that Taiwan shift the bulk of its manufacturing of advanced chips to U.S. territory, Taiwanese Vice Premier Cheng Li-chiun stated in an interview that the demand was “impossible” — pushing back on Washington’s push to reduce reliance on semiconductor fabs near China that could be captured or destroyed in a war. While Taipei has agreed to lower tariffs and boost U.S. investment in recent trade talks, Cheng stressed Taiwan’s chip ecosystem must remain rooted on the island, despite U.S. tariff threats if targets of 40% reshoring are not met.

- **Media mogul Jimmy Lai sentenced to 20 years in prison:** A Hong Kong court on

Monday sentenced Lai, 78, on charges of sedition and conspiracy to collude with foreign forces. Lai has been behind bars since December 2020—mostly in solitary confinement where his health has severely deteriorated. Lai was arrested in 2020 under the national security law that China implemented in Hong Kong, following the pro-democracy protests in 2019. Lai is the founder of Apple Daily, a popular Hong Kong newspaper that supported the pro-democracy movement but was forced to close in 2021 after police arrested the paper’s employees and froze its assets. Reporters Without Borders said the court decision “underscores the complete collapse of press freedom in Hong Kong and the authorities’ profound contempt for independent journalism.”

## More from Drop Site

- **Israeli settlers, military accelerate violent expulsion of Palestinians off their land in the West Bank:**

Israel’s state-backed campaign of forcible transfer of Palestinians in the occupied West Bank has been unfolding at an unprecedented rate over the past three years. What was once creeping encroachment by settlers has escalated into a violent campaign of mass expulsion, with tens of thousands of Palestinians displaced by the Israeli military and settlers working in tandem. Reporting from the ground in the West Bank, **Drop Site**

**contributor Zena Tahhan** reports on Palestinian Bedouin communities who have been forcibly displaced from their lands, some of them multiple times. **More than 60** Palestinian Bedouin villages have been entirely expelled and erased since 2022. **The full article is available [here](#).**

- **Somaliland launches Trump-linked lobbying push for U.S. recognition as Somalia mounts counteroffensive:** The breakaway territory of Somaliland has hired the Trump-connected lobbying firm Nestpoint to press Washington for formal recognition following its establishment of ties with Israel, according to U.S. lobbying disclosures reported by Drop Site News. Republican-aligned think tanks and donors have pushed to follow Israel and recognize Somaliland, though most of Congress and President Donald Trump have so far resisted altering long-standing U.S. policy in the Horn of Africa. **An exclusive report on the effort from Drop Site contributor Daniel Medina is available [here](#).**