

Israel says it killed top Iranian security official; Pakistan bombing kills hundreds in Kabul; Cuba hit by blackout amid Trump blockade

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War on Iran

- **Israel claims it killed top Iranian security official:** Israel said Tuesday it has killed Ali Larijani, the secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council, and Gen. Gholamreza Soleimani, the commander of the paramilitary Basij force, in separate airstrikes. "Larijani and the Basij commander were eliminated last night and have joined Khamenei, the head of the annihilation program, along with all those eliminated from the axis of evil in the depths of hell," Israel's Defense Minister Israel Katz said in a statement. At the time of publication, Iran has not confirmed or denied either death. If confirmed, Larijani would be the highest-level Iranian official killed in the war since the assassination of Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, and several members of his family in an Israeli attack, on the first day of the war. A former parliamentary speaker and senior policy adviser, Larijani was appointed to advise the late Khamenei in nuclear talks with the Trump administration. Larijani was last seen publicly on Friday, attending a rally in support of Palestinians in Tehran. Larijani's office published a handwritten letter in Farsi that it said he wrote commemorating the Iranian sailors killed when their ship was targeted by a U.S. submarine off the Sri Lankan coast. Israel said it killed Gholam Reza Soleimani, the head of the paramilitary Basij force in a combat tent alongside other Basij commanders.

- **U.S.-Israeli strikes kill civilians:**

- A U.S.-Israeli missile [strike](#) hit a home in Amrabad near Arak in central Iran, killing a family of four as they slept, local reports said. The victims included a three-day-old baby, his two-year-old sister, their mother, and grandmother.

- Multiple reports said a new wave of U.S.-Israeli airstrikes [struck](#) Tehran on Tuesday morning, with videos and social media posts showing impacts in several parts of the capital, including Piroozi Street in eastern Tehran and the Niavaran area in the north, according to the BBC. Earlier Monday, Israel struck a government-linked

economic office in the city, with nearby civilian shops—including a bakery, supermarket, banks, and other storefronts—also damaged in the blast.

- **12,000 Tehran housing units damaged:** At least 12,000 housing units in Tehran have sustained partial or total damage as a result of the U.S.-Israeli assault on Iran, the governor of Tehran Mohammad Sadegh Motamadian said, according to the Mehr news agency. At least 56 museums, historical monuments, and cultural sites in Iran have also been damaged, according to the country's Heritage Ministry.
- **A heavy price for civilians in Iran:** In a [statement](#), the International Committee of the Red Cross's head of delegation in Iran, Vincent Cassard, said civilians are paying a "heavy price" in Iran. "I am seeing the heavy strain that the recent escalation of hostilities has placed on people in Iran, who fear for their lives, the safety of their loved ones and their livelihoods. The heavy loss of life is alarming. Civilian infrastructure has been affected, and many homes have been severely damaged by the hostilities. Daily life in Tehran has been profoundly disrupted: children are not attending school, and many businesses have temporarily closed as a precaution due to the ongoing strikes," Cassard said.
- **Drone strikes target Fujairah:** Fires were still [burning](#) Monday in the oil industrial zone at the UAE's Fujairah port after a drone strike hit the facility early in the day, according to Reuters and CNBC. The attack forced ADNOC to suspend crude loading temporarily. A commercial tanker [anchored](#) about 23 nautical miles off Fujairah in the Gulf of Oman was also struck by an unknown projectile on Monday, causing minor structural damage but no injuries, according to UK Maritime Trade Operations. The incidents follow another drone-related fire Saturday that briefly halted the port's operations.
- **Strikes in Iraq kill PMF fighters:** Suspected U.S.-Israeli strikes in Iraq [killed](#) at least eight fighters from the Popular Mobilization Forces in the country's Anbar province, according to Associated Press reporting, though no group has formally claimed responsibility. The deadliest attack struck a PMF checkpoint, killing six fighters, while another strike hit a brigade headquarters in the same region. The Iran-aligned Kataib Hezbollah militia also said one of its senior security officials was killed. Separate drone attacks targeted Baghdad's Rasheed Hotel in the Green Zone and Iraq's Majnoon oil field in Basra province, damaging infrastructure but with no reported casualties. In response to the U.S.-Israeli escalation, Iran has continued its retaliatory attacks in the country, with two Shahed-136 drones reportedly striking inside the U.S. embassy complex, according to Reuters. No casualties or injuries were reported from these attacks.

- **Explosions reported in Doha and Dubai:** A Pakistani national was killed by debris from strikes in Abu Dhabi. Explosions were [reported](#) in Doha and Dubai, and regional air defenses were activated under the threat of continued Iranian strikes, with Qatar saying it intercepted at least one incoming missile, according to the Associated Press.
- **Iran allows limited shipping through Hormuz:** Iran has [allowed](#) at least four vessels to transit the Strait of Hormuz in the past 24 hours, routing them through the Larak-Qeshm channel inside Iranian territorial waters rather than the usual international shipping lanes, according to MarineTraffic. The ships included three bulk carriers and a Pakistani Aframax tanker carrying Abu Dhabi crude—the first non-Iranian cargo to pass the chokepoint while broadcasting its AIS signal.
- **Trump claims Tehran rally was AI-generated despite verified footage:** President Donald Trump [claimed](#) a large rally in Tehran supporting Iran’s new Supreme Leader, Mojtaba Khamenei, was “totally AI-generated,” despite photos and video verified by multiple international outlets, including The New York Times, showing tens of thousands gathered in Revolution Square. Trump also suggested potential treason charges and FCC license reviews over media coverage of the event and accused Iran of using artificial intelligence as a “disinformation weapon.”
- **Iranian parliament speaker says security in Strait of Hormuz has forever changed:** Iran’s parliament speaker, Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf, [said](#) the security landscape in the Strait of Hormuz “will never be the same.” He accused the United States of submitting to Israeli influence and said President Donald Trump is “lying several times a day out of desperation,” claiming Iran has targeted all U.S. bases in the region. Ghalibaf added that the “face and order of the Middle East are changing,” arguing that the region’s countries will shape their own security and economics, and will no longer answer to the United States.
- **Iran is ignoring U.S. requests to talk:** Iranian officials told Drop Site that the Trump administration has privately sought talks through envoy Steve Witkoff while publicly claiming Tehran is seeking negotiations. Tehran says it will only consider a ceasefire once it secures guarantees against future attacks on itself and its allies in Iraq and Lebanon. “The message...is clear: Iran has once again closed the window for any direct negotiations,” a senior Iranian official told Drop Site. And it is doing so because the U.S. “appears to be seeking a temporary ceasefire in order... to employ a combination of diplomacy and pressure to advance its broader objectives within Iran’s political system.” Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi later [rejected](#) a White House claim, reported by Axios, that he had sent messages to U.S. envoy Steve Witkoff seeking talks to end the war. Araghchi said his last contact with Witkoff occurred before Washington “decided to kill diplomacy with another

illegal military attack on Iran,” and suggested the claims were intended to “mislead oil traders and the public.” **Read the full report from Jeremy Scahill [here](#).**

Lebanon

- **Casualty count:** The death toll from Israel’s assault on Lebanon has risen to at least 886, including 111 children, since March 2, according to Lebanon’s Health Ministry.
- **Mass displacement in Lebanon surges:** Lebanon’s government [said](#) Israeli strikes and ground incursions since March 2 have displaced more than 1 million people—about one-fifth of the country’s population.
- **Three Lebanese soldiers killed in Israeli strikes:** Three Lebanese army soldiers were killed and four others wounded in Israeli strikes on Nabatieh in southern Lebanon on Tuesday as they were moving by car and motorcycle, the Lebanese army said.
- **Israeli strikes hit multiple sites across Lebanon:**
 - **Five killed on Tuesday:** Two people were killed on Tuesday in Israeli airstrikes on al-Jumayjimah in southern Lebanon, according to the state National News Agency. Three people were also killed in Israeli airstrikes on the nearby town of Bint Jbeil.
 - **Airstrikes hit Beirut suburbs:** Two large Israeli airstrikes [hit](#) Beirut’s southern suburbs on Monday night, minutes apart, after a forced displacement order for the area was renewed. Another strike targeted a residential building in Aramoun.
 - **Israel kills three more first responders in southern Lebanon strike:** Israel [killed](#) three first responders on Monday morning after striking an ambulance in Kfar Sir in the Nabatieh district that had been responding to an earlier attack, according to L’Orient Today. The ambulance was operated by the Islamic Health Committee and was hit around 9:31 a.m. Beirut time. The deaths bring the number of healthcare workers killed in Israeli attacks in Lebanon to 35 since March 2.
- **Close-quarters fighting intensifies along the Israel-Lebanon border:** Close-quarters fighting [continues](#) between Hezbollah fighters and Israeli forces in southern Lebanon, with local media reporting intense clashes in the hilltop town of Khiam as Israeli troops attempt to seize control. Israeli forces that pushed into Kfar Shuba reportedly raided homes on the town’s outskirts and abducted a resident before withdrawing to nearby highlands. Hezbollah said it struck five Israeli tanks in the past 24 hours, including a direct hit in Taybeh, and fired rockets at Israeli positions near the stadium and detention center in Khiam.
- **UN peacekeepers report Israeli troop buildup inside southern Lebanon:** The United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) [says](#) it has observed an “evident” buildup of

Israeli troops at six locations inside southern Lebanon near the Blue Line, according to the Associated Press. Peacekeepers reported clashes around Odaisseh and Khiam, with Israeli ground incursions reaching roughly three miles into Lebanese territory in some cases.

UNIFIL said its ability to monitor the situation has been limited by ongoing fighting, which has restricted peacekeepers' movements. That buildup is corroborated by other reports on Monday that Israel is considering mobilizing up to 450,000 reservists for its ground invasion, according to Middle East Monitor, a major increase from the 260,000 previously authorized, as reported by the BBC.

- **European leaders warn against Israeli offensive in Lebanon:** Canada, France, Germany, Italy and Britain said in a joint statement on Monday that a “significant” Israeli offensive in Lebanon must be averted. “A significant Israeli ground offensive would have devastating humanitarian consequences and could lead to a protracted conflict,” the countries said. “We are gravely concerned by the escalating violence in Lebanon and call for meaningful engagement by Israeli and Lebanese representatives to negotiate a sustainable political solution.”

- **Israeli strikes kill Lebanese paramedic who vowed to continue rescue work:** Lebanese paramedic Haj Qassem Sultan, who had publicly vowed to continue serving despite Israeli attacks on emergency workers, was killed Friday when an Israeli strike destroyed an Islamic Health Authority medical center in Burj Qalaouiyah in southern Lebanon, killing 12 people, including doctors, paramedics, and patients. “Our message is clear,” Sultan said in his final remarks. “Even if we are killed one by one, we will not abandon our duty. We will continue to serve Khiam and Marjayoun and Al-Taybeh and Debbine and all of our sacred land.” **Read more about Israel’s targeting of Lebanese medical personnel in the latest dispatch from Drop Site contributor Lylla Younes, [here](#).**

The Gaza Genocide, Israel and the West Bank

- **Casualty counts:** Over the past 24 hours, two Palestinians were killed and 20 were injured in Israeli attacks across Gaza. The total recorded death toll since October 7, 2023 has risen to 72,249 killed, with 171,898 injured. Since October 11, the first full day of the so-called ceasefire, Israel has killed at least 673 Palestinians in Gaza and wounded 1,799, while 756 bodies have been recovered from under the rubble, according to the Palestinian Ministry of Health.

- **Israeli forces continue their slaughter in Gaza:** Two Palestinians were killed Tuesday and 12 wounded in an Israeli airstrike on a vehicle in Muwasi Khan Younis, according to the Palestinian Red Crescent. On Monday, Israeli forces [killed](#) at least two Palestinians in Gaza. Bahaa al-Qarra was shot by Israeli snipers near Nasser Hospital in Khan Younis, and a child,

Mohammad Warsh Agha, was shot in the abdomen in Beit Lahia in northern Gaza. A later Israeli strike killed Younis Eliyan and wounded four others, while a woman, Amna Subh, was critically wounded by sniper fire in Beit Lahia.

- **Israeli forces shoot two Palestinian teenagers near Ramallah:** Israeli forces [shot](#) two 16-year-old Palestinians, Fathi Sahouri and Salim Faqha, near the entrance to Turmus Ayya northeast of Ramallah on March 16 in the occupied West Bank. The Palestine Red Crescent Society said Israeli forces prevented its medical crews from reaching the wounded near the Sinjil junction, an area the army declared a closed military zone. Israeli troops later raided the nearby town of Sinjil, searching homes and commercial shops.

- **Settlers assault Palestinian residents during raid in the Jordan Valley:** Israeli settlers [carried out](#) a violent overnight raid on Khirbet Humsa in the northern Jordan Valley, where witnesses told Haaretz that dozens of masked attackers stormed the community, bound residents, and reportedly sexually assaulted a Palestinian man while forcing families to watch. Residents and international activists said settlers beat men, women, and girls, threatened to rape women and kill children, and assaulted detainees who had been zip-tied and blindfolded. Six people were evacuated for medical treatment, and residents said Israeli soldiers later detained the victims while the illegal settlers fled the area.

United States

By Julian Andreone, with Ryan Grim. Have a tip on Capitol Hill? Email Andreone at Julian@dropsitenews.com.

- **Trump official resigns citing Israeli influence over government:** Joe Kent resigned Tuesday as Director of the National Counterterrorism Center, saying, “I cannot in good conscience support the ongoing war in Iran. Iran posed no imminent threat to our nation, and it is clear that we started this war due to pressure from Israel and its powerful American lobby.” While a number of leaders in the Trump administration have acknowledged Israel’s role in compelling the United States to join them in their war against Iran, Kent is the first to directly cite the influence of the Israel lobby and seemingly imply corrupt motives behind the conflict.

- **Momentum picks up for a vote on Gottheimer’s War Powers Resolution:** Pro-Israel congressman **Rep. Josh Gottheimer (D-N.J.)** announced in a press release that he plans to force a vote on his War Powers Resolution, initially introduced as a watered-down countermeasure to the resolution brought forth by **Reps. Ro Khanna (D-Calif.)** and **Thomas Massie (R-Ky.)**. The vote could come as early as Thursday next week. This motion, if passed, would end the Trump administration’s illegal war of aggression against Iran by March 30,

thirty days after it was originally introduced, a constraining timeline outlined specifically in the text of the legislation.

- **CEO cashes out while laying off workers amid merger:** Warner Bros. Discovery CEO David Zaslav is set to walk away with an \$887 million compensation package after the Trump administration facilitated a monopolistic merger between Paramount and Warner Bros. As the agreement is being finalized, thousands of workers are simultaneously set to lose their jobs.

- **Progressives and special interests showdown in Illinois:** A wave of Democratic primaries defined by excessive special interest spending will come to an end Tuesday night as polls close at 8 p.m. ET. National progressive figures like **Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.)**, **Sen. Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.)**, and **Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-N.Y.)** have passed out a handful of endorsements to populist candidates like Junaid Ahmed and Juliana Stratton across the state to counter the influence of groups like AIPAC, the pro-crypto lobby, and pro-AI super PACs, who have concentrated their efforts on electing more conservative Democrats.

- **Kat Abughazaleh's changes website language on National Endowment for Democracy:** Kat Abughazaleh, who is seeking to replace **Rep. Jan Schakowsky (D-Ill.)** in today's Illinois primaries, has [rewritten](#) the "issues" page of her campaign website, removing language that called for the State Department to work with the National Endowment for Democracy and other foreign capacity-building entities in the rebuilding of Gaza. Her website was updated to say that the earlier language "did not accurately reflect Kat's views or the values of the campaign." Abughazaleh's foreign policy views have been a matter of concern before; her former foreign policy advisor [described](#) her to Drop Site as "firmly an interventionist," though that criticism revolved primarily around her views on Russia and Taiwan. Abughazaleh picked up another important endorsement today, with **Rep. Ilhan Omar (D-Minn.)** [joining Rep. Rashida Tlaib \(D-Mich.\)](#) in endorsing her ahead of today's elections.

- **Former presidents deny Trump's claim about bombing Iran:** President Donald Trump [said](#) Monday that a former U.S. president told him he wished he had been the one to bomb Iran. Aides for George W. Bush, Bill Clinton, and Barack Obama said no such conversations had occurred, and a source said the remark did not refer to Joe Biden. Trump repeated the claim twice during the day but declined to identify the person to whom he was referring.

- **Federal judge blocks Kennedy's vaccine policy changes:** A federal judge in Massachusetts [halted](#) a series of vaccine policy changes implemented by Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr., ruling that the government bypassed established scientific procedures in altering immunization recommendations. The decision temporarily reverses actions taken

by Kennedy's newly appointed Advisory Committee for Immunization Practices and blocks the panel from meeting this week. The ruling came in response to a lawsuit by medical organizations that argued the changes, which included reducing the number of diseases covered by routine childhood vaccinations and restricting access to Covid shots, were arbitrary and endangered public health.

- **Palestinian activist Leqaa Kordia released from ICE detention:** Palestinian activist Leqaa Kordia, who had been [held](#) by Immigration and Customs Enforcement for nearly a year following the Columbia University Gaza protest crackdown, was released Monday on a \$100,000 bond, according to The New York Times. An immigration judge granted the bond on March 13, marking the third court order for her release after the government previously blocked earlier rulings. NYC Mayor Zohran Mamdani noted that he personally asked President Trump last month to release Kordia, saying that he was “grateful that Leqaa has been released...after more than a year in detention for speaking up for Palestinian rights.” Drop Site contributor Areeba Fatima [points out](#) that a number of activists and organizations, including Aida Alami and the Sunrise Movement, have been tireless in pursuit of this result. Kordia, a Palestinian from East Jerusalem arrested by ICE on March 13, 2025 after attending Gaza solidarity protests at Columbia, had her protest-related charges later dropped. **More about her case can be read here, in an [article](#) from the New Yorker.**

- **Private prison firms and lobbyists profit from expanding ICE detention:** More than 70,000 migrants are currently held in U.S. immigration detention facilities, most without criminal convictions, as private prison companies GEO Group and CoreCivic derive significant revenue from federal contracts tied to immigration enforcement. The companies and their lobbyists have spent millions of dollars influencing federal policy and funding for detention facilities, including large lobbying campaigns on K Street and substantial political donations. Migrant Insider has provided a profile of a few of these lobbyists and their firms. **That full report is available [here](#).**

Other International News

- **Afghanistan says Pakistani raid on Kabul hospital killed hundreds:** Afghanistan's Ministry of Health [said](#) a Pakistani raid on a hospital in Kabul killed 400 people and wounded about 250 others. Residents in the area told Drop Site News contributor Emran Feroz that the hospital itself was struck during the attack. Pakistan has not immediately commented on the allegation.

- **U.S. reportedly demands Díaz-Canel step down in Cuba talks:** The Trump administration has [told](#) Cuban negotiators that President Miguel Díaz-Canel must step down for meaningful progress in U.S.-Cuba negotiations, according to The New York Times. U.S.

officials are reportedly seeking his removal as a symbolic political concession while pressing Havana to open parts of its economy to American businesses and release political prisoners. Díaz-Canel, president since 2018, is widely seen as having limited authority within Cuba's power structure, where the military-linked conglomerate GAESA and senior Communist Party figures hold significant influence. Also on Tuesday, Trump **called** Cuba “a beautiful island” and said he would have “the honor” of taking it. “Whether I free it, take it. I think I can do anything I want with it, if you want to know the truth.”

- **Cuba suffers island-wide blackout amid deepening fuel shortages:** Cuba **reported** an island-wide blackout Monday after a “complete disconnection” of the national electrical system, affecting roughly 11 million residents, according to the Ministry of Energy and Mines. Officials say the crisis is driven by severe fuel shortages linked to U.S. pressure on countries supplying oil to the island, leaving the grid reliant on solar power, natural gas, and aging thermoelectric plants. The outage—the sixth nationwide blackout in 18 months—has forced hospitals to postpone tens of thousands of surgeries as authorities begin restoration efforts that could take days. Cuban authorities said Tuesday that the system was gradually being restored, with service restored to most of the island.

- **Police investigate chant at London Al Quds Day rally:** London's Metropolitan Police **said** it has opened a new investigation after rapper Bobby Vylan led chants of “death to the IDF” during an Al Quds Day rally in central London on Sunday. Vylan previously led the same chant during a performance at the Glastonbury Festival last year. A prior police investigation into the Glastonbury chant ended without charges after prosecutors said there was insufficient evidence to pursue a case.

- **Probe examines alleged payments to Javier Milei over \$Libra cryptocurrency promotion:** Argentina's judiciary has uncovered evidence **suggesting** President Javier Milei may have been paid to promote the cryptocurrency \$Libra, which is now under fraud investigation. El País reports investigators recovered deleted notes from businessman Mauricio Novelli's phone describing a \$5 million agreement tied to Milei publicly endorsing the token, with amounts matching millions later moved through crypto wallets. Prosecutors in Argentina and the United States are investigating the February 2025 collapse—after Milei promoted the token on X and its price spiked then crashed—as a possible insider-driven scam that left thousands of investors with losses.

- **War returns to Iraq as political uncertainty deepens:** Rallies in Baghdad marking Al Quds Day and honoring Iran's new Supreme Leader reflected growing mobilization among Iran-aligned paramilitaries as the U.S.-Israel war with Iran spills into Iraq, where recent strikes have killed members of the Popular Mobilization Forces and triggered attacks on U.S. positions. The violence has intensified political fractures within Iraq's Shia establishment,

with armed factions threatening retaliation while the government struggles to maintain authority, and with the potential ascension of Nouri al-Maliki, the country's disgraced Shia prime minister, looking more likely. **Read Nabih Salih's full dispatch from Iraq for Drop Site [here](#).**

- **Ecuador launches U.S.-backed military operation:** President Daniel Noboa deployed 75,000 soldiers, rounding up children, and reportedly torturing a 20 year old man to death. In the days leading up to the operation, soldiers dismantled hundreds of public street cameras and imposed curfews that even barred journalists, normally exempt from such restrictions, from being in public after 11 p.m. A family from the city of Milagro came forward, alleging that the military had tortured their relative, Bryan Argenis Ledesma Franco, a man in his 20s, to death, placed his body in a pick-up truck, and left him at a hospital where he was [pronounced dead](#). Noboa has issued 11 State of Exception decrees in the past year, effectively imposing a de facto martial law that grants both Ecuadorian soldiers and U.S. military personnel broad authority with minimal oversight.

- **Colombian President claims Ecuador bombed border region:** Colombian President Petro claimed that a bomb had hit the border region, with the attack not coming from irregular armed groups but rather from a plane, suggesting the Ecuadorean military was to blame.

More from Drop Site

- Melat Kiros, running to represent Colorado's first congressional district, joined Julian Andreone to discuss her campaign against incumbent Rep. Diana DeGette (D-Colo.) Watch episode 3 of our new series "EYEING OFFICE," [interviewing](#) 2026 congressional candidates, below.



EYEING OFFICE: MELAT KIROS



· In the days following the launch of the US and Israel's war on Iran, the circumstances of a strike that killed at least 175 civilians at a girls' school in Minab have been heavily debated — specifically, the question of which country's military was behind the strike. As of Wednesday, the preliminary findings of an ongoing military investigation confirmed the US to be at fault. Drop Site's Washington correspondent, Julian Andreone, asked members of Congress what they knew about the strikes and potential investigations into the subjects. [Here's](#) what they said: