

Hospitals in Gaza face power shutdowns; U.S. polling firm admits fabricating data; Water crisis in Yemen

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Iran

- **Iran rules out transferring enriched uranium abroad, reiterates seven conditions for U.S. talks:** “Not even a particle” of Iran’s enriched uranium will leave the country, Supreme National Security Council Secretary Mohsen Rezaei [told](#) Pakistani mediator and Army Chief Field Marshal Asim Munir during talks in Tehran on Tuesday.

- Rezaei described the material as a “major national asset” reserved for domestic use—Tehran maintains that its nuclear program is peaceful and that uranium enrichment is its sovereign right. He reiterated negotiations with Washington would not begin until the U.S. took steps to rebuild trust and meet Iran’s conditions.

- Parliament Speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf [told](#) Munir that Iran had “nothing new” beyond the seven conditions previously presented in New York, accusing Washington of violating the Islamabad memorandum of understanding and deepening distrust through President Donald Trump’s repeated threats.

- **“The U.S. must accept it has no military options”:** Iran is prepared to negotiate a “just and honourable deal” with Washington, but diplomacy can only succeed once the U.S. accepts that “it has no military options,” Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi wrote in a Financial Times [op-ed](#) Wednesday.

- Araghchi said he presented a plan through mediators at last month’s UN General Assembly to end the war and reopen the Strait of Hormuz. Under its terms, the strait would fully reopen on Day 6, with negotiations toward a final agreement beginning on Day 7. He maintained that Washington would not be required to make concessions beyond those it had previously accepted.

- Separately, Araghchi [said](#) in an interview with Iraq’s Al Ekhbariya television network that Washington had agreed to the conditions in Iran’s seven-day proposal but requested additional clauses. “The Americans informed us that they agreed to these

conditions, but they wanted to add a few more clauses,” he said, confirming that diplomatic contacts remain ongoing.

- U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio welcomed mediation efforts by countries including Qatar and Pakistan, but stressed that any agreement with Iran would ultimately require Trump’s approval. “At the end, any decision on what will be acceptable will be in the hands of the president,” Rubio told reporters.

· **Iraq closes major border crossing with Iran indefinitely, with more closures expected:**

Iraq **indefinitely closed** the Sheeb border crossing with Iran, known on the Iranian side as Chazabeh, to passengers, vehicles, and commercial trucks, with several other crossings expected to close gradually in the coming days, Iraqi officials told Al Jazeera and Reuters on Wednesday.

- An Iraqi border official said the closure was intended to review security arrangements and install detection equipment to prevent the smuggling of prohibited materials.
- Iranian officials confirmed the closure, saying talks with Iraqi authorities were underway to reopen the crossing.

· **Two tankers struck by projectiles near Oman and Iraq:** Two oil tankers were struck by unidentified projectiles in separate incidents near Oman and Iraq on Tuesday and Wednesday, according to the United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations. All crew members aboard both tankers were reported safe, with no environmental impact reported in either incident.

- **Near Oman:** A tanker was struck on Wednesday, 11 nautical miles west of Bukha, sparking a fire that was subsequently extinguished.
- **Near Iraq:** A tanker was struck Tuesday, 30 nautical miles southeast of Al Faw.

· **UK re-arrests two men over alleged Iran-linked incident near U.S. base:** British counter-terrorism police **re-arrested** two men on suspicion of assisting a foreign intelligence service in connection with a September 27 incident near RAF Fairford, a British airbase used by U.S. bombers for operations against Iran. The suspects, one British and the other a dual British-Iranian national, are among seven men arrested in the investigation, according to the BBC.

- Counter-terrorism chief Laurence Taylor said investigators considered it “highly likely that there is Iranian state involvement,” while acknowledging that the extent and purpose of any involvement remained under investigation. Iran has denied involvement.

- Following the incident, Washington withdrew its bombers from the base, with Trump citing unspecified threats and Vice President JD Vance describing the move as an “abundance of caution.”
- **WSJ: Middle East oil exports surpass prewar levels despite escalating tanker attacks near Hormuz:** Middle East oil exports appear to have [surpassed](#) prewar levels despite escalating attacks on tankers in the Strait of Hormuz, according to Kpler data cited by the Wall Street Journal.
 - Regional oil shipments averaged more than 24 million barrels per day in the week through October 18, compared with 23.3 million before the U.S.-Israeli war on Iran began in February.
 - The report said the recovery has been made possible by the improvised shipping system, including tanker-to-tanker transfers in the Gulf of Oman, and expanded use of Saudi and Emirati pipelines bypassing Hormuz. However oil prices [remain](#) high, around \$110 per barrel of Brent crude, over the continued throttling of the Strait of Hormuz and falling U.S. fuel stockpiles.
 - The Kpler chart below tracks Gulf and Gulf of Oman exports, excluding Red Sea shipments. Its latest 14 days of data remain subject to upward revision, but the seven-day average appears to have tagged 20 million barrels per day in regional exports.

Palestine

- **Killed and wounded in Gaza:** An Israeli drone strike killed a Palestinian man in Khan Younis, southern Gaza, on Wednesday, Al Jazeera reported. A child also died from wounds sustained in an earlier Israeli airstrike on the Al-Jalaa area of Gaza City.
 - Over the past 24 hours, seven Palestinians were killed and 24 injured across Gaza, according to the Palestinian Ministry of Health.
 - The total recorded death toll since October 7, 2023, is now 74,494 killed, with 175,604 injured. Since October 11, 2025, the first full day of the so-called ceasefire, Israel has killed at least 1,534 Palestinians in Gaza and wounded 5,486, while 841 bodies have been recovered.
- **Israeli forces and settlers attack olive harvesters across the occupied West Bank, demolish seven apartments near Jerusalem:**
 - **Bethlehem:** Israeli forces detained U.S. congressional candidate Brad Lander, alongside Palestinian farmers and dozens of foreign and Israeli activists harvesting

olives in Husan, west of Bethlehem. The group included 45 foreign and 25 Israeli activists from T'ruah, a Jewish human rights organization. Lander was subsequently **released** with a warning, while the others arrested alongside him remained in detention at the time of publication.

- Israeli forces raided two schools in Tuqu' during morning classes, entering classrooms and threatening to close the schools, and confiscated Palestinian flags.
- **Jenin:** Israeli forces **expelled** farmers from their land in Deir Abu Daif despite prior authorization to harvest olives.
- **Hebron:** Armed Israeli settlers from a newly established settlement outpost **opened live fire** toward Palestinian olive harvesters in Birin.
- **Ramallah:** Israeli settlers, accompanied by Israeli forces, **blocked** Palestinians from harvesting olives in Turmus Ayya.
- **Nablus:** Israeli settlers **set fire** to Palestinian agricultural land in Burqa.
- **East Jerusalem:** Israeli forces **demolished** seven apartments belonging near Qalandiya refugee camp, displacing 35 Palestinians. Soldiers also damaged a vehicle and physically assaulted homeowners.
- **UN urges protection of Palestinians as settler olive harvest attacks escalate:** The UN Human Rights Office in the Occupied Palestinian Territory **called** on member states and donors to press for the protection of Palestinian communities during the olive harvest season. At least 160 Israeli settler attacks related to the olive harvest were recorded in the first two weeks of October alone.
 - The UN urged “member states to increase international and diplomatic field presence and engagement in high-risk communities, particularly during critical harvesting periods, complementing existing protective presence arrangements and focusing attention on locations facing recurrent violence and access restrictions.”
- **Gaza hospitals face power shutdowns as generator oil supplies run out:** Supplies of oil needed to operate hospital electricity generators have been exhausted, threatening the immediate mechanical breakdown of the remaining generators and power cuts to critical, life-saving departments, Gaza's Health Ministry warned Wednesday.

- The ministry warned that limited emergency deliveries of oil were no longer sufficient to keep generators running, as extended operating hours have increased consumption and accelerated mechanical deterioration.
- The ministry called for immediate intervention to allow the entry of generator oil and spare parts as Israel continues to severely restrict the entry of aid and life essentials into Gaza.
- **Read Drop Site's coverage of Gaza's electricity crisis as a result of Israel's restrictions on engine oil and spare parts for generators [here](#).**

Yemen

- **Three million in Yemen's Taiz risk losing water access, UN warns:** Escalating fighting and fuel shortages in Yemen's Taiz governorate threaten water systems serving three million people, including 1.6 million children, UNICEF [warned](#).
 - More than 52,000 of the 168,000 children screened by UNICEF in Taiz this year were acutely malnourished—nearly one in three. The World Food Programme warned that wheat flour stocks in affected areas are nearly exhausted, with 10 of Taiz's 16 districts previously classified at emergency levels of food insecurity.
 - Suspected cholera cases across Yemen have tripled in three weeks, according to the WHO, raising fears that unsafe water and disease will further worsen child malnutrition.
 - Ansarallah struck a residential area in Taiz on Tuesday, killing two teenage girls, according to Al Jazeera.
- **Ansarallah claims attack on military base, airport:** An explosion was reported near Aden airport on Wednesday, with smoke rising from the area, according to AFP. Ansarallah military spokesman Yahya Saree [said](#) the group targeted the Saudi-led coalition's military operations room at Badr camp in Aden with a ballistic missile, claiming the strike was "precise and direct."
 - **Hadramaut:** Ansarallah claimed responsibility for an attack on military equipment at Riyan airport in Mukalla, eastern Yemen, alleging that Saudi Arabia had transported weapons and military supplies there aboard military cargo aircraft for use against Yemenis.

- **Taiz:** Three young women were wounded in Ansarallah shelling east of Taiz city and in the Al-Wehda neighborhood, according to the Saudi-backed Yemeni government.
- **Saada:** Three Saudi-led coalition airstrikes destroyed a telecommunications network in the Maran district, according to Ansarallah-affiliated media.
- **Saudi Arabia:** The Saudi-led coalition said it intercepted and destroyed four drones over the Medina and Eastern regions. Ansarallah [denied](#) launching drones toward Medina, with Saree saying the group had carried out no military operations against Saudi Arabia on Wednesday.

Lebanon

- **Israeli attacks hit four districts in southern Lebanon, sniper fires at journalists amid “ceasefire”:** Israeli forces carried out multiple attacks across southern Lebanon on Wednesday, including a [large explosion](#) in Kfartibnit and a [drone strike](#) between Kfartibnit and Nabatieh Al-Fawqa, both in Nabatieh district, according to Lebanon’s National News Agency. Israeli warplanes also struck Al-Hamra Farm on the outskirts of Zawtar in the same district.
 - Journalist Courtney Bonneau [reported](#) that an Israeli sniper fired at her and her colleague Ali while they were working in Zawtar Al-Gharbiyeh, in Nabatieh district. “We were clearly marked press and standing with a member of the Lebanese army,” she said. Zawtar Al-Gharbiyeh is one of three southern Lebanese towns where the Lebanese army has deployed under a U.S.-brokered arrangement.
 - In Hasbaya district, Israeli artillery shells struck near the Baathail pond, while shelling also targeted the outskirts of Khiam in Marjayoun district.
- **Israel and Lebanon resume U.S.-hosted military talks:** Military delegations from Lebanon, Israel, and the United States began three days of talks Tuesday at U.S. Central Command headquarters in Tampa, Florida. The talks, scheduled to conclude Thursday, are limited to military and security issues under a U.S.-brokered framework signed in June.
 - Hours before the talks, the Israeli military [accused](#) Lebanese army personnel of coordinating with Hezbollah and failing to dismantle its military infrastructure, alleging that the group continued operating at a facility in Kafra. The Lebanese army [rejected](#) the accusations as false, saying Israeli threats had forced it to suspend work at the site in March and that Israel repeatedly blocked its return. The army said it completed the operation on October 16.

- Lebanon's military also disputed Israeli footage allegedly showing Hezbollah weapons being transported from the Kafra facility, saying it was filmed in a different village in July.

U.S. News

· **U.S. polling firm that weighed in on Michigan, Maine Senate races now says its data was fake:** Wedgewood Polling said it fabricated most of its election surveys, claiming the hoaxes were meant to test media scrutiny. Wedgewood Polling's fake data was cited by numerous news outlets and entered major polling averages, including those of the New York Times. The firm's admission came after FiftyPlusOne confronted it with evidence of fraudulent data.

- The New York Times [said](#) it published 15 Wedgewood polls between June and October, which covered state and congressional races in Michigan, Georgia, Mississippi, Maine and Kansas. The Times says it vetted Wedgewood's work before publishing its data.

- **Mallory McMorrow**, a candidate in Michigan's Democratic primary, was the subject of a Wedgewood poll in June that suggested that her support was plummeting. She [said](#) on X that the poll cost her donor and volunteer support at a crucial moment. Other polls around the same time also showed McMorrow in third place.

· **Anthropic records \$80B net loss in first half of 2026:** The artificial intelligence company Anthropic, known for its chatbot Claude, recorded a net loss of more than \$80 billion in the first half of 2026, according to a draft prospectus for a massive initial public offering planned next month, the Wall Street Journal [reported](#).

- Anthropic also indicated it could spend up to \$750 billion in the coming years to acquire additional computing capacity.

· **Trump announces \$25 million program paying up to \$30,000 for tips on government fraud:** On Tuesday, President Trump [announced](#) that the administration will pay individuals roughly \$10,000 to \$30,000 for tips on government fraud submitted through a government website. The program, run by the Justice Department, is part of Vice President **JD Vance's** antifraud task force. Trump said he would be the ultimate arbitrator of award amounts. The White House said right-wing content creator **Nick Shirley**, who was in the Oval Office during the announcement, would receive \$10,000 for his viral video last year that alleged fraud at daycare centers. Some of his allegations were debunked by Minnesota news outlets.

- **L.A. officials say DOJ's purported noncitizen list includes "high percentage" of U.S. citizens:** Los Angeles election officials said the DOJ's list of 20,000 suspected noncitizens includes a "high percentage" of people born in the U.S., according to court papers [filed](#) Tuesday. **Aman Bhullar** of the clerk and recorder's office wrote in a declaration that 38.9% of a 200-record sample indicated a U.S. birth. He said 43% of the sampled voters had cancelled registrations, 71% had never voted, and 86 people had been mailed a ballot this year. The filing also alleged that only about 7,000 of the 20,000 names had a Los Angeles County address.

- The Department of Homeland Security compiled the list and has refused to share its matching methodology, and experts warn the method is error-prone. In July it accused Nevada of up to 16,000 noncitizens on the rolls, then sent a list of 185 names, all of whom Nevada found to be citizens.

- **Attack ad featuring Amy Acton's estranged mother deepens ugliness of Ohio governor's race:** A new ad [released](#) online on Monday features **Donna Arthur**, mother of Democratic nominee **Amy Acton**, accusing the candidate of lying about her childhood abuse, poverty, and instability. Acton has said she was homeless as a child and molested by her stepfather. A 2019 newspaper report said he was charged with raping her in 1978, and her campaign has documents showing he pleaded not guilty, was indicted, fled the state before trial, and died in 2004. Arthur, who remained married to him and supported him rather than her daughter, publicly accused Acton, then the state's director of health, of exaggerating in 2020. The mother and daughter have not spoken to each other since the 1978 trial. Acton's brother, **Philip Stearns**, called the ad "a despicable low," saying their mother "stayed married to Amy's rapist until he died." It is unclear whether Republican nominee **Vivek Ramaswamy's** campaign or an allied group made the ad, and the campaign did not say whether Arthur was paid for it.

- **Cook Political Report updates two Senate projections in direction of Democrats, moves South Carolina to "lean Republican":** On Tuesday, Cook Political Report [moved](#) Minnesota's open Senate seat, held by retiring Democrat **Tina Smith**, from likely to lean Democrat, South Carolina from likely Republican to lean Republican, and Mississippi from solid Republican to likely Republican.

- **DHS says Noem-era plane purchases are tied to "ongoing criminal law enforcement investigation":** DHS's Privacy Office [told](#) The Washington Sun that the aircraft bought in the final days of **Kristi Noem's** tenure relate to an "ongoing criminal law enforcement investigation." It said DHS "can neither confirm nor deny the existence of records" because doing so could interfere with ongoing or prospective enforcement proceedings.

- The acknowledgment follows a New York Times report that DHS bought five planes from donor-linked Daedalus Aviation at a “substantial markup.” Noem asked the Times to retract or correct its story and disputed its characterization of Daedalus a political donor to her, though its chair, **William Walters**, gave \$10,000 to American Resolve, a super PAC founded for her benefit.
- **NYT: Billionaire’s family gave former Trump official \$50 million deal while seeking pardon:** The Venezuelan banker **Julio Herrera Velutini** aggressively pursued a pardon after pleading guilty to felony bribery in 2025, according to a new report from the New York Times. To secure the pardon, he and his lawyer **Christopher Kise**, a former member of Trump’s personal legal team, pushed for clemency, and his daughter **Isabela Herrera**, 27, gave \$3.5 million to a Trump-tied super PAC. When this didn’t work, the family hired **Alina Habba**, a former Trump lawyer then serving as a Justice Department adviser, offering her \$10 million a year for four years, with bonuses guaranteeing a total sum of over \$50 million. According to the offer, she would become general counsel at Concord Partners, a Florida company Herrera set up in late October 2025 with no public profile and an unclear business ambit. Habba agreed to the offer, and began working at the firm on January 1. Weeks later, Trump granted Herrera a full, unconditional pardon. By then, Habba was a senior adviser to Attorney General **Pam Bondi**, working as a special government employee. Habba denies any impropriety and says her employment by Velutini had nothing to do with the pardon.
- **Thousands of North Carolina voters likely disenfranchised under strict new rules, data shows:** The overall rejection rate of mail-in ballots in North Carolina is around 3%, according to [analysis](#) by Common Cause North Carolina and the Southern Coalition for Social Justice. In some Democratic strongholds, including Mecklenburg and Forsyth, the rejection rate reaches 7% or 8%. At 3% statewide, Democracy Docket estimates about 3,942 ballots would be rejected. Voters would be disenfranchised unless they correct for the errors identified, which few do. Absentee requests are down 32% from 2022, with voters citing fear of spoiled ballots.



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

Other International News

- **Nigeria confirms first Ebola case:** A woman in the Nigerian capital of Abuja tested positive for Ebola, Reuters [reported](#). “She is in isolation, and she is receiving quality medical care,” Nigerian Health Minister Muhammad Ali Pate said. “Contact tracing has been conducted, and it’s under way as we speak, with 44 contacts already identified.” He added

that the patient had recently traveled to Democratic Republic of the Congo, the epicenter of an Ebola outbreak, and returned to Nigeria through Uganda.

- **Death toll in Sudan strike on market climbs to 150+:** The attack on a market near the disputed town of Abyei, near the border of Sudan and South Sudan, killed at least 153 people, Reuters reported. South Sudanese officials blamed the attack on the Sudanese military.

- **Twelve children killed in recent attacks in Sudan, UN says:** At least 12 children have been killed in two recent attacks, according to [UNICEF](#). On Saturday, at least nine children between the ages of 5 and ten were killed in a strike on a camp for displaced families in West Kordofan. On Monday a drone struck a residential area in Khartoum, killing three children between the ages of 2 and 6, along with their father.

- **Islamic State-linked militants kill at least 48 civilians in Mali:** Islamic State Sahel Province fighters [killed](#) at least 48 civilians in eastern Mali over the weekend, Reuters reported. The attacks came after pro-government forces allegedly committed abuses last week.

- **TPLF says it has killed 1,500 Ethiopian government troops:** A spokesperson for the Tigray People's Liberation Front [said](#) Tuesday that they killed more than 1,500 Ethiopian troops in two days of fighting in northern Ethiopia's Tigray region, citing an ambush in Mirena on Oct. 17 and 18. The government units were trying to push toward Adet, in central Tigray. The spokesperson said 1,511 Ethiopian soldiers were killed and 1,050 wounded, and that the Tigray Peace Force, a pro-government militia, suffered 11 casualties. The figures have not been independently verified, and the Ethiopian government has not responded to them.

- **Eastern Libya parliament approves maritime deal with Turkey:** Libya's eastern parliament [agreed](#) to a maritime boundaries deal with Turkey on Tuesday. The outlines of the agreement have been in place since 2019, and were originally affirmed by Libya's recognized government in Tripoli. But the quasi-government in eastern Libya, led by the military commander Khalifa Haftar, allowed the agreement to languish for years. Upon hearing of the eastern Libyan parliament's approval, Greece strongly criticized it, calling the deal "illegal, null and void." Egypt and Cyprus expressed similar objections.

- **Bangladesh says Saudi Arabia is ignoring inquiries into execution of two Bangladeshi citizens:** Saudi Arabia has not responded to Bangladesh's requests for clarification of the Saudi execution of two Bangladeshi citizens, Reuters [reported](#). The executions, carried out on October 14, were punishment for committing "indecent acts" in a Mecca mosque, the Saudi interior ministry claimed. Saudi officials never notified Bangladesh of the executions.

- **Russian strikes on Ukraine kill 2; hit apartment building, university, transit and energy infrastructure:** Russian [strikes](#) on Kharkiv killed two people on Tuesday, Reuters reported. Russian strikes hit a large apartment building in Kyiv and transport infrastructure. A Russian attack on a university in Kremenchuk, in central Ukraine, injured two people.

- Russian forces also [attacked](#) the Ukrainian port of Reni and two Odesa-bound vessels on Tuesday. Other Russian strikes hit logistics hubs in Volyn and the city of Khmelnytskyi, which the Russian defense ministry said were Ukrainian military targets.

- **NATO to send personnel to Black Sea after deadly drone attacks:** NATO is ramping up its deployment of “maritime patrol aircraft, radar systems, explosive exploitation teams, intelligence personnel, drones and more” to the Black Sea, the military alliance [said](#). The announcement follows several lethal attacks in the Black Sea, which Ukraine and its allies have blamed on Russia. Russia denies responsibility. “Six attacks in 10 days by suspected Russian drones marks a dangerous and unacceptable escalation,” Kaja Kallas, the European Union’s lead diplomat, said Tuesday.

- **South Korea to withdraw embassy staff from Ukraine over North Korean POW dispute:** South Korea will withdraw an unspecified number of embassy staff working in Kyiv, Ukraine, the foreign ministry [said](#) Tuesday. South Korea said it had not received a “constructive response” from Ukraine over Ukraine’s transfer of two North Korean POWs to South Korea. A charge d’affaires and all consular staff will remain in Kyiv.

- In early October, South Korea recalled its ambassador over the dispute. It has said that Ukraine’s transfer of the POWs should have remained private, to protect the soldiers’ families.

- **France deploying “massive” number of troops to quell protests:** France is preparing for another weekend of large protests by deploying its military against demonstrators, Reuters [reported](#). “The deployment next Saturday will be massive,” said Prime Minister Sebastien Lecornu. He blamed the protests on the political left. More than half a million protesters have taken to the streets since September in objection to the rising cost of living and a public-welfare system degraded by austerity politics.

- **Italy sends 500 troops to Milan in crackdown on cost-of-living protests:** Italy’s cabinet [approved](#) the deployment of 500 troops to Milan on Tuesday. In citywide protests against a high cost of living and ineffective public services, demonstrators looted shops, smashed windows, and clashed with police over the weekend. According to the Defense Ministry, soldiers will reinforce security at key sites and conduct surveillance on the protests.

- The cabinet also passed new measures that immediately criminalize violent participation in a demonstration. Any individual found in a group of five or more people that “endangers public safety” will face up to five years’ imprisonment and a €20,000 (\$22,460) fine.
- **Thousands protest housing legislation in Portugal:** Thousands of protesters returned to the streets in Lisbon and Porto to oppose legislation that would harm renters, Al Jazeera [reported](#). Police in Portugal, which faces one of the worst housing crises in Europe, had earlier declared the protests illegal and cleared encampments in public squares. The protesters demanded Portugal’s center-right government withdraw a bill that makes evictions easier and ends rent caps on new leases.