

Large funeral for Palestinian youth killed by Israeli troops in West Bank; Two GOP senators join calls for Kristi Noem's resignation; Ilhan Omar attacked at town hall

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DROP SITE NEWS

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The Gaza Genocide, West Bank, and Israel

- Casualty counts in the last 24 hours: Over the past 24 hours, the bodies of five Palestinians arrived at hospitals in Gaza, including one recovered from under the rubble, while six Palestinians were injured, according to the Gaza Ministry of Health. The total recorded death toll since October 7, 2023 is now 71,667 killed, with 171,434 injured.
- Total casualty counts since ceasefire: Since October 11, the first full day of the ceasefire, Israel has killed at least 492 Palestinians in Gaza and wounded 1,356, while 715 bodies have been recovered from under the rubble, according to the Ministry of Health.
- Israeli attacks across Gaza in continued violation of ceasefire: Israeli artillery and aircraft continued to target areas across Gaza on Wednesday, according to Al Jazeera, with shelling in eastern Khan Younis, airstrikes east of Deir al-Balah, and demolitions in Jabaliya.
- Hamas urges civil servants to cooperate with the U.S.-backed NCAG as governance transition looms: Hamas has urged its roughly 40,000 civil servants and security personnel to cooperate with the National Committee for the Administration of Gaza (NCAG), assuring them the movement is working to protect their jobs and secure their incorporation into the new system, according to a letter seen by Reuters. NCAG was established as part of the Board of Peace and operates under several layers of bureaucratic hierarchy; it is the only body in the Board of Peace that includes Palestinians. Hamas has also pushed for the inclusion of the present police force in the enclave in the new administration, a police force that has been formally deployed since the ceasefire took effect and has been credited by the World Food Program with securing aid distribution. Reuters reports that Hamas and NCAG chair Ali Shaath have not yet met or discussed these proposals.

- Egypt prepares partial reopening of Rafah crossing amid mounting medical crisis: An Egyptian source [told](#) Al-Araby that preparations are underway to partially reopen the Rafah crossing starting today, with members of Gaza's administrative committee expected to enter the Strip on Thursday. The source said the European Union Border Assistance Mission arrived on the Palestinian side of Rafah on Tuesday morning. Wounded Palestinians treated in Egypt are expected to be the first returnees by way of the crossing. 20,000 more Palestinians are awaiting deportation medical treatment, denied to them by Israel's closing of the Rafah crossing and restrictions on entry into Jerusalem and the West Bank, according to estimates from the Health Ministry.
- Kushner calls for free-market shift as WFP warns Israel is blocking one: Jared Kushner, a senior adviser to President Donald Trump and an executive board member of the Board of Peace, [said](#) Thursday that the Board aims to move Gaza away from an aid-dependent economy toward a market-based model as part of his proposed "master plan" for the territory. Carl Skau, deputy executive director of the World Food Programme, used similar language yesterday, saying that a "proper market approach" would require allowing the market to determine access to goods, which Israeli controls have to this point prevented. Kushner has said the goal is to apply what he describes as Trump's "economic mindset" to Gaza.
- Israeli high court again delays ruling on foreign journalists' entry: Israel's High Court of Justice on Tuesday [postponed](#) a decision for a second time on whether foreign journalists can enter Gaza, granting the government an additional two months to respond more than a year after the initial petition was filed. At a hearing this week, state lawyers cited only vague "security risks," according to the petition submitted by the Foreign Press Association (FPA), which is challenging Israel's blanket ban on foreign reporters entering the enclave. In a statement, the FPA criticized the decision saying, "the court appears to have been swayed by the state's classified security arguments, which were presented behind closed doors and without the presence of the FPA's attorneys. This secretive process offers no opportunity for us to rebut these arguments and clears the way for the continued arbitrary and open-ended closure of Gaza to foreign journalists." Palestinian journalists continue reporting from inside Gaza under extreme conditions, despite being systematically targeted, injured, and killed by Israeli forces, and remain the primary source of on-the-ground coverage.
- Israel tells high court it will continue blocking medical evacuations to West Bank: Israel [told](#) its High Court of Justice it will continue preventing the evacuation of medical patients in Gaza need of treatment to hospitals in the West Bank and East Jerusalem, claiming patient transfers pose unspecified "security risks," including potential recruitment to, or information sharing with, resistance groups, Haaretz reported. Five rights groups, including Gisha and

Adalah, said the policy violates Israeli and international law, arguing that denying life-saving care to Palestinians in Gaza amounts to a death sentence for thousands.

- Netanyahu vows to disarm Hamas and impose Gaza demilitarization “no matter the cost”: Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu [said](#) Tuesday that Israel will “disarm Hamas” and enforce the “demilitarization of Gaza,” framing it as the country’s final objective regardless of its consequences.
- Israeli troops and settlers attack Palestinians across the West Bank, killing Mohammad Rajeh Nasrallah: Israeli forces carried out a number of raids and assaulted many Palestinians across the occupied West Bank, with at least 130 Palestinians temporarily detained since Tuesday night, according to the Palestinian Prisoner’s Society. Israeli forces shot 20-year-old Mohammad Rajeh Nasrallah during a military raid into the town of Ad-Dhahiriya, south of Hebron, and Nasrallah was [pronounced](#) dead Wednesday due to the severity of his wounds. Meanwhile, Israeli settlers stormed Palestinian land near the town of Turmus Aya, close to Ramallah, and uprooted at least 200 olive trees, according to the Wafa news agency.
- West Bank settlers launch large-scale attack in Masafer Yatta village: A major settler attack [began](#) Tuesday evening in al-Halawa in Masafer Yatta, with at least 40 settlers assaulting residents, torching property, and blocking ambulances from reaching the wounded, according to Drop Site contributor Jasper Nathaniel. The attack has left many Palestinians injured as emergency medical access remains obstructed; no casualty figures have yet emerged.
- The UN says the humanitarian situation remains dire in Gaza: The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs [said](#) on Tuesday that humanitarian needs across Gaza remain acute, with more than one million people still requiring urgent shelter, as 7,500 families received shelter items last week. Aid agencies are providing daily supplies of bread to roughly 43 percent of Gaza’s population, while around 1.2 million people received flour this month. More than 6,000 children have also been vaccinated as part of an immunization campaign, even as overall humanitarian conditions continue to deteriorate.
- Israel clears land in Rafah for potential surveillance camp: Reuters [confirmed](#) Drop Site’s [reporting](#) that Israel has cleared land in southern Gaza to build a large concentration camp in the Rafah area that could use surveillance and facial recognition to monitor Palestinians. Citing retired Brigadier-General Amir Avivi, an advisor to the military, the report says the camp could house hundreds of thousands of Palestinians, including those seeking to leave Gaza.

U.S. News

- Rep. Ilhan Omar sprayed with unknown substance during town hall: U.S. Representative Ilhan Omar (D-Minnesota) was **assaulted** Tuesday at a town hall meeting in Minneapolis, when a man in the audience sprayed her with an unknown liquid from a syringe while she spoke, according to police and multiple news reports. The assailant, a 55-year-old man named Anthony J. Kazmierczak, was quickly detained by security and arrested on suspicion of third-degree assault. Omar was not injured and continued the event after a brief pause. The attack occurred as Omar was criticizing U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement and calling for the resignation or impeachment of the Department of Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem. Witnesses said the liquid had a strong odor, and some audience members urged her to seek medical evaluation, but Omar declined, telling those assembled that “we are Minnesota strong” and vowing not to be intimidated.
- Tillis and Murkowski become first GOP senators to call for Noem’s resignation: Republican Senators Thom Tillis and Lisa Murkowski called for Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem to resign on Tuesday, marking the first public calls from within the GOP for her departure following the fatal shooting of Alex Petti in Minneapolis. President Donald Trump said he still has confidence in Noem, even as the White House has distanced itself from her initial account of the shooting. Meanwhile, House Democratic leaders are threatening to launch impeachment proceedings if Noem isn’t fired. House minority leader Hakeem Jeffries, and Reps. Katherine Clark and Pete Aguilar said in a **statement**: “Kristi Noem should be fired immediately, or we will commence impeachment proceedings in the House of Representatives. We can do this the easy way or the hard way.”
- Internal CBP review contradicts Trump administration account of the killing of Alex Petti in Minneapolis: An internal assessment by the Customs and Border Protection oversight office, known as the Office of Professional Responsibility, contradicts the Trump administration’s initial narrative of the shooting of 37-year-old Alex Petti last week in Minneapolis, according to a CBP preliminary review shared to **NPR**. The Trump administration accused Petti of attacking officers or threatening them with a weapon, yet the internal review makes no mention of these claims. CBP officers attempted to take Petti into custody, as he resisted their efforts and a struggle ensued, according to the internal CBP assessment. Asked about the CBP report on Tuesday, White House Deputy Chief of Staff Stephen Miller said in a statement that the “extra personnel sent to Minnesota for force protection should be used to create a physical barrier between arrest teams and the disruptors,” and that officials are examining whether protocol was followed on the scene of Petti’s shooting.

- Minnesota police disperse anti-ICE protest outside hotel housing CBP commander: Anti-ICE activists and community members gathered Monday night outside a SpringHill Suites in Minneapolis after reports emerged that Customs and Border Protection commander Greg Bovino was preparing to leave Minnesota. Multiple law enforcement agencies—including Minnesota State Troopers, county sheriffs, and local police—used pepper balls, threatened the use of chemical agents, and activated a long-range acoustic device before charging the crowd and making several arrests. Police declared the demonstration an unlawful assembly, with one officer explaining it was unlawful “because it was declared unlawful,” according to video from the scene showing an escalating police response as demonstrators were forced to disperse. A video from Drop Site contributor A.B. Youssef, who reported live from the protests, is available [here](#).
- DHS tracked Minneapolis protesters, documented Pretti before killing: Federal immigration officers [collected](#) personal information on protesters in Minneapolis and had documented details on Alex Pretti before he was fatally shot Saturday, including a prior encounter about a week earlier in which agents allegedly tackled Pretti during a protest, leaving him with a broken rib, sources told CNN. The Department of Homeland Security confirmed that it has instructed agents to gather images and identifying information on protesters, but denied running a database of “domestic terrorists,” as civil liberties advocates warn the practice risks criminalizing constitutionally protected protest activity.
- NYPD arrests dozens at anti-ICE protest inside Manhattan hotel: New York City police arrested dozens of protesters Tuesday evening during an anti-ICE demonstration inside a Hilton Garden Inn in Manhattan, the first such mass arrest under Mayor Zohran Mamdani. Protesters occupied the hotel lobby, calling for ICE’s abolition and demanding the agency leave New York City, responding to claims that federal immigration officials were staying at the hotel. Drop Site’s reporter on the scene did not see any immigration officials at the hotel. The arrests were carried out by the NYPD’s Special Response Group, the department’s counterterrorism and protest-control unit, which Mamdani has previously pledged to disband. Organizers estimate that around 70 protesters were arrested, while other reports place arrest numbers around 40. A video report from Drop Site Contributor Jose Olivares is available [here](#).
- A child and mother were deported amid ICE enforcement surge: Five-year-old Génesis Ester Gutiérrez Castellanos—a U.S. citizen born in Austin, Texas—was [deported](#) to Honduras on January 11 alongside her mother, Karen Guadalupe Gutiérrez Castellanos, after Immigration and Customs Enforcement acted on a pre-2019 deportation order against the mother, according to The Guardian. Advocates for Castellanos say the case involved serious procedural violations, including detention in a hotel without access to lawyers or a judge. “I

do unfortunately anticipate that there will be more of these very difficult situations where parents are being deported, and their children are either left behind or removed from the lives they knew in the U.S.,” one analyst said.

- Murphy declines to back abolishing ICE: Drop Site’s Washington correspondent Julian Andreone [asked](#) Chris Murphy what it would take for him to support abolishing Immigration and Customs Enforcement. Murphy did not directly endorse abolition, saying “right now, we need for the practices in Minneapolis to stop; the roving patrols, the profiling, the lack of accountability...what’s happening in Minneapolis right now is absolutely unacceptable.” Their full [exchange](#) can be watched here.

International News

- Trump threatens military action against Iran as U.S. warships arrive to the region: The aircraft carrier USS Abraham Lincoln and three destroyers have arrived in the Middle East as President Trump renewed threats of a possible U.S. attack on Iran. In a statement, CENTCOM said the warships were “currently deployed to the Middle East to promote regional security and stability.” In a post on Truth Social, President Trump wrote: “A massive Armada is heading to Iran. It is moving quickly, with great power, enthusiasm, and purpose.” He added: “Hopefully Iran will quickly ‘Come to the Table’ and negotiate a fair and equitable deal - NO NUCLEAR WEAPONS - one that is good for all parties. Time is running out, it is truly of the essence!” In a reference to the US bombing of Iran in June, Trump warned “The next attack will be far worse!” In response, Iran’s mission to the UN wrote on social media: “Last time the U.S. blundered into wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, it squandered over \$7 trillion and lost more than 7,000 American lives. Iran stands ready for dialogue based on mutual respect and interests—BUT IF PUSHED, IT WILL DEFEND ITSELF AND RESPOND LIKE NEVER BEFORE!”

- Sudan—analysts warn UAE and RSF may open new front via Ethiopia: Sudan’s civil war could be [entering](#) a more dangerous phase as the United Arab Emirates and the Rapid Support Forces threaten to expand the conflict into Ethiopia, potentially opening a new front along Sudan’s eastern border. Writing in Foreign Policy, Cameron Hudson and Liam Karr argue that the United Arab Emirates, the main backer of the Rapid Support Forces, may be using Ethiopia to expand supply lines and operations, particularly around the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam region. The authors warn that such a move could further expand the war; draw in Ethiopia, Eritrea, and Egypt; and deepen what is already the world’s worst humanitarian crisis. Karr and Hudson’s full analysis of the conflict is available [here](#).

- Russian forces begin partial withdrawal from Qamishli as UN aid arrives: Russian forces have begun [pulling](#) equipment out of their positions around Qamishli in northeast Syria, according to Associated Press reporting. Syrian Democratic Forces fighters at a base near the

airport said the drawdown started five or six days ago and is proceeding gradually. There has been no official statement from Moscow, which has retained its main air and naval bases on Syria's coast since the fall of the prior government. Separately, a United Nations humanitarian convoy from Damascus [reached](#) Qamishli on Tuesday with food, warm clothing, and blankets, with additional convoys planned in the coming days, as a fragile ceasefire between the SDF and Syrian government forces continues to hold.

- Israeli strike kills Al-Manar TV presenter in Tyre: Ali Nour el-Din, a television presenter with Al-Manar TV, a station affiliated with Hezbollah, was killed Monday in an Israeli air strike on the southern Lebanese city of Tyre, according to [Al Jazeera](#). Lebanon's Information Minister Paul Morcos condemned the killing as a violation of international law, while the Israeli military acknowledged the strike and accused Nour el-Din of being a Hezbollah member. The killing brings the number of Lebanese journalists killed in Israeli attacks since 2023 to at least six, according to the Committee to Protect Journalists, as Israeli strikes since the ceasefire have killed more than 350 people across Lebanon.
- Bassil says FPM–Hezbollah alliance has collapsed, signaling a political break: Lebanese politician Gebran Bassil, the head of the Free Patriotic Movement, [said](#) Tuesday that the party's 2006 Mar Mikhael Agreement with Hezbollah has "collapsed," criticizing the group's retention of its weapons and its alignment with Iran, and warning that opening a front in support of Gaza in October 2023 no longer made it a "deterrent." Bassil's remarks mark a significant shift for a party that has provided Hezbollah with domestic support.
- UN warns of major crisis in Jonglei amid mass displacement and cholera: The United Nations [warned](#) again that a major humanitarian crisis is unfolding in Jonglei State in South Sudan, where more than 230,000 people have been displaced since late December following government-ordered evacuations. Civilians are sheltering outdoors with little or no access to basic services, while flight bans have halted medical evacuations and severely disrupted aid deliveries. The UN said at least 115,000 people have lost access to basic healthcare, as a cholera outbreak spreads across affected areas, with 938 cases and 29 deaths reported to date. Aid agencies warned that continued restrictions on movement and access risk accelerating the health emergency and worsening conditions for displaced people in the country.
- Russian strikes kill 12, hit passenger train and energy sites amid peace talks: Russian attacks [killed](#) at least 12 people overnight across Ukraine, including five passengers when a drone struck a train carriage in the Kharkiv region, while barrages of drones and missiles hit energy infrastructure and residential areas in Odessa and multiple other regions. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said the strikes undermine ongoing U.S.-brokered

negotiations with Russia, as Ukraine's air force said it launched 165 attack drones in response.

- European rearmament accelerates as Trump's Greenland remarks revive NATO doubts: President Donald Trump's renewed talk of acquiring Greenland has [reignited](#) debate among North Atlantic Treaty Organization allies over whether Europe could defend itself without the U.S. While European arms production is expanding at its fastest pace in decades, the International Institute for Strategic Studies estimates that replacing U.S. forces and equipment would cost around \$1 trillion, and major gaps remain in areas like stealth fighters, long-range missiles, and satellite intelligence. A full report on European rearmament from the Wall Street Journal is available [here](#).
- Boko Haram ambush kills seven soldiers, captures commanding officer in Nigeria's Borno: Suspected Boko Haram militants [killed](#) seven Nigerian soldiers and captured 13 others, including their commanding officer, during an ambush on a patrol in the Damasak area of Borno State on Monday, according to two security sources cited by Reuters. The attack comes despite a renewed Nigerian military offensive in the northeast, where Boko Haram and its splinter faction Islamic State West Africa Province continue to mount large-scale assaults on military targets.
- Syrian president in Moscow on state visit: Syrian interim president Ahmed al-Sharaa arrived in Moscow on a state visit to negotiate bilateral relations between Russia and the new Syrian government, as well as the future of the Russian military presence in the country. During the visit Russian president Vladimir Putin said that Russia supports his efforts to "restore Syria's territorial integrity," in the wake of recent clashes between the Syrian military and Kurdish-led SDF.

More from Drop Site

- Weekly livestream, "Leaked Document Outlines Trump's Plan to Rule Gaza": The so-called Board of Peace that President Donald Trump officially launched in Davos, Switzerland last week is developing sweeping plans for a U.S.-backed administration to rule Gaza. Leaked documents exclusively reported on by Jonathan Whittall show the Board's bureaucratic plans for total control of Gaza—without Palestinian participation or input. Whittall, who was a senior UN official in Palestine before being expelled by Israel last year, joins Drop Site's Jeremy Scahill and Sharif Abdel Kouddous to discuss the reality on the ground in Gaza, Trump's installation of himself as the indefinite chair of the Board of Peace, and what Israel is doing to make its presence in Gaza permanent. Watch these discussions (and others) in the full livestream [here](#).