

U.S. to add thousands of troops in Middle East; Israel continues to batter Lebanon, Gaza; Four killed in yet another Pacific boat strike

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Iran and Ceasefire

- **Mediators reportedly move closer to extending U.S.-Iran ceasefire:** Efforts are underway to restart negotiations between the United States and Iran to extend a shaky ceasefire before it expires next week. Regional officials told the Associated Press Wednesday that the U.S. and Iran had given an “in principle agreement” to extend it to allow for more diplomacy. The main three sticking points include Iran’s nuclear program, the Strait of Hormuz, and compensation for wartime damages, a regional official told the AP. Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif began a four-day trip to Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and Turkey on Wednesday as part of a diplomatic push to secure a new round of talks between the U.S. and Iran.
- **Trump and Vance comment on war and ceasefire negotiations:** In an interview with Fox Business on Wednesday, President Donald Trump said the U.S-Israeli war on Iran is “very close” to an end. “I think it’s close to over, yeah. I view it as very close to being over,” he told Fox Business. He appeared to break with that position in the same interview, however, threatening that the U.S. is “not finished,” and once again making dubious claims that the war was motivated by Iran’s near-acquisition of a nuclear weapon. Vice President JD Vance also talked about the war, telling attendees at a Turning Point USA event that there was a lot of mistrust between the Americans and Iranians, and “You are not going to solve that problem overnight,” but that he felt “very good about where we are.”
- **Pezeshkian says Iran seeks dialogue:** Iranian president Masoud Pezeshkian said Iran is seeking dialogue. “Iran is not seeking war or instability and has always emphasized dialogue and constructive engagement with various countries. However, any attempt to impose one’s will or force the country to surrender is doomed to failure, and the Iranian nation will never accept such an approach,” Pezeshkian said, according to the IRNA news agency.
- **WP: U.S sending thousands more troops to Middle East:** While diplomatic efforts are underway to extend the ceasefire, the United States is sending thousands of additional troops into the Middle East in the coming days, according to the Washington Post. Citing U.S. officials, the Post reported that the forces include 6,000 troops aboard the aircraft carrier USS George H.W. Bush and several warships escorting it, and 4,200 others with the Boxer Amphibious Ready Group and its embarked Marine Corps task force that are expected to arrive near the end of the month. White House Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt told the Post

that Trump “has wisely kept all options on the table in the event that the Iranians will not forgo their nuclear ambitions and make a deal that is acceptable to the United States.”

- **Report: Iranian supertanker crosses Strait of Hormuz despite U.S. blockade:** A sanctioned Iranian supertanker crossed the Strait of Hormuz towards Iran’s Imam Khomeini Port despite a U.S. blockade, Iran’s Fars News Agency reported on Wednesday. It was not clear if the tanker was returning with its cargo on board or was empty, the report said. Fars also cited ship tracking data to report that a vessel transporting food supplies has entered the Gulf and is en route to Imam Khomeini port. On Tuesday, U.S. Central Command claimed that no ships calling at Iranian ports have passed the American blockade, saying six that merchant vessels were ordered to turn around re-entered an Iranian port on the Gulf of Oman. The commander of Iran’s Khatam al-Anbiya Central Headquarters, Maj Gen Ali Abdollahi, warned on Wednesday that Iran’s military could block shipping beyond the Strait of Hormuz if the U.S. continues with its naval blockade, which Tehran would consider a breach of the ceasefire. Iranian armed forces “will not allow any exports or imports to continue in the Persian Gulf, the Sea of Oman or the Red Sea” if the U.S. blockade continues “creates insecurity for Iran’s merchant and oil tanker vessels,” Abdollahi said, according to the Tasnim news agency.
- **World Bank prepares up to \$100 billion in war relief funding for Middle East:** World Bank President Ajay Banga said Tuesday the institution could mobilize \$80 billion to \$100 billion over the next 15 months for countries hit hard by the Middle East war—surpassing the \$70 billion it deployed during the COVID pandemic. “I’m trying to create a toolkit that has a tiered response capacity, depending on how this continues, to at least be able to bring adequate firepower to do something about it,” he said at the International Monetary Fund’s spring meetings. The announcement came alongside an International Monetary Fund decision to cut its global growth outlook due to war-driven energy price spikes, with the IMF noting it would have upgraded its forecast by 0.1 percentage point to 3.4% absent the conflict. IMF Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva said the global economy could recover rapidly if the war ends within weeks, but warned the outlook would worsen significantly if the conflict extends through the summer.
- **Iranian Kurdish leader signals that he would support further U.S. attacks on Iran:** Iran launched four attacks on at least two Iranian Kurdish opposition groups inside Iraqi Kurdistan on Tuesday, continuing a campaign of drone and ballistic missile strikes against Kurdish targets, after Kurdish groups flirted with joining the U.S. and Israel in their war on Iran and reportedly received some “light weapons” from U.S. officials to help facilitate an uprising. The leader of the Kurdish Komala Party, Abdullah Mohtadi, told Al-Monitor in an exclusive interview, that “America and Israel sustaining their bombing campaign, weakening the regime any further, would make it easier for the people to rise up,” and did not rule out cooperating with any country “including Israel.” He also denied that Komala had received weapons from the U.S., while expressing admiration for Trump, for putting “an end to the policy of appeasement toward Iran.” More on the Kurds, from Al Monitor, [here](#).

Lebanon

- **Despite ceasefire talks, Israel continues to batter Lebanon:**
 - At least 14 Lebanese civilians have been killed by Israeli airstrikes on Wednesday, according to the National News Agency, including four members of one family in Jbaa and five in Ansariyeh, with additional casualties reported in Qadmus. A drone strike on a motorcycle in Zahrani killed one person. Two Israeli airstrikes hit civilian vehicles south of Beirut on Wednesday morning without any reported casualties, artillery shelling struck the Bint Jbeil district, and strikes were reported in towns across the south, in the areas between Hallousiyeh and Zrariyeh.
 - The Israeli military renewed its sweeping displacement order for all Lebanese residents in areas south of the Zahrani River on Wednesday.
 - Intense fighting was reported in Bint Jbeil on Tuesday, as Israeli forces advanced toward the town center, according to Al Mayadeen. Machine-gun fire and shelling were heard across the area, with troops now about 500 meters from the main market, L'Orient reported.
 - Air strikes on Tyre and al-Abbasiyya on Tuesday killed least two, according to Al Jazeera.
 - Israel's military claimed on Wednesday it struck more than 200 targets in southern Lebanon over the past 24 hours.
- **U.S., Israel, and Lebanon hold talks:** Lebanon and Israel held their first direct diplomatic talks in decades on Tuesday in Washington, DC. The trilateral meeting was convened by the State Department with the participation of Secretary of State Marco Rubio, Israeli Ambassador to the U.S. Yechiel Leiter, Lebanese Ambassador to the U.S. Nadeh Hamadeh, and other officials. In a statement, the State Department claimed the two sides had “productive discussions on steps toward launching direct negotiations between Israel and Lebanon.” The U.S. also said any ceasefire agreement “must be reached between the two governments, brokered by the United States, and not through any separate track,” despite Lebanon being specifically mentioned as part of the U.S.-Iran ceasefire agreement. Hezbollah staunchly opposed the talks. The U.S. made a point of reiterating its support of Israel’s “right to defend itself from Hezbollah’s attacks.” The Lebanese delegation emphasized its sovereignty, called for full implementation of the November 2024 ceasefire, and sought urgent humanitarian relief. Israel’s delegation, which has claimed as its foremost priority the disarming of Hezbollah, said that it “discovered today” that it was on “the same side of the equation” as its Lebanese counterparts.

Gaza, the West Bank, and Israel

- **Israel continues to attack Gaza**

- The Israeli military said on Wednesday it killed one Palestinian in northern Gaza “who crossed the yellow line.”
 - Israeli gunfire and shelling wounded four Palestinians in the Zeitoun neighborhood and at the Jabalia refugee camp in Gaza City on Wednesday, Wafa reports. Later attacks on Zeitoun destroyed several houses in the neighborhood.
 - At least 11 Palestinians were killed in separate Israeli attacks on Tuesday, including at least two children, according to Al Jazeera. Four people were killed, including a three-year-old in a strike targeting a police vehicle in Gaza City on Tuesday. Later in the evening, Civil Defense reported that another Israeli strike killed several people near an intersection in the Shati refugee camp in Gaza City. Another person was killed by Israeli fire in Beit Lahia.
 - Israeli forces shot and killed 14-year-old Adam Ahmed Khalaa near the Jabalia refugee camp in northern Gaza on Tuesday.
- **Israeli attacks on the West Bank persist**
 - Israeli forces demolished a house and several residential structures in Silwan and Issawiya in East Jerusalem on Wednesday morning, and assaulted several community members and foreign journalists in a raid on the Al-Bustan neighborhood.
 - Israeli settlers attacked a Bedouin family near Jericho on Wednesday, in the community of Halq al-Rumman, attempting to break into the house of a family in the community and causing widespread panic.
 - Israeli security forces arrested a former head of a local charity in Hebron on Wednesday, storming into the city’s Charitable Islamic Association and grabbing him.
 - Three Palestinians were detained in Bal’a, near Tulkarm, during a 15-hour raid on the village by the Israeli military, according to Wafa. Israeli soldiers reportedly conducted extensive raids in the town, handcuffing and blindfolding its young men before leading them to a “field interrogation center.” One of those still detained is a 63-year-old man.
 - An attack by Israeli settlers on the village of Tuqu’, near Bethlehem, injured three Palestinians on Tuesday. The settlers reportedly sprayed pepper spray in the faces of the Palestinians while attempting to steal their sheep. Another Israeli settler attack, conducted late at night near Nablus, involved the destruction of the road that connects the village of Duma to Khirbet al-Marajem. And in an attack on the Jerusalem suburb of Al-Ram, a bulldozer, reportedly belonging to Israeli military forces, razed a Palestinian horse stable.
 - **Palestinian political prisoner Marwan Barghouti repeatedly assaulted by Israeli prison guards:** Ben Marmarelli, a lawyer for Palestinian political prisoner Marwan Barghouti, reported three violent assaults by Israeli prison guards against his client in the span of two weeks, including a severe beating on April 8 at Ganot Prison during which Barghouti was left bleeding for more than two hours and denied medical care, following an earlier attack during a prison transfer and a dog attack at Megiddo Prison. He said the attacks “form a

pattern of rapidly escalating abuse” that places Barghouti “at immediate risk of severe harm or death,” and called for his immediate release.

U.S. News

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

- **House Dems introduce bill which would formally assess Trump’s fitness for office:** House Judiciary Committee Ranking Member **Jamie Raskin (D-Md.)** introduced legislation on Tuesday that would establish a 17-member bipartisan commission authorized under Section 4 of the 25th Amendment to conduct a medical examination of President Donald Trump and assess whether he is mentally or physically unable to discharge the duties of his office, with 50 Democratic co-sponsors signed on. The bill faces long odds—Republicans control Congress, Trump could veto it, and any removal would ultimately require Vice President JD Vance’s sign-off and a two-thirds vote in both chambers—but comes after more than 85 House and Senate Democrats last week called for Trump’s impeachment or removal.
- **Joint Chiefs chairman lobbies Congress to renew warrantless surveillance law:** Joint Chiefs Chair General Dan Caine wrote a letter to several key congressional committees on Monday urging lawmakers to back President Donald Trump’s push for an 18-month clean reauthorization of Section 702 of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, which, though ostensibly used to collect data on “foreign targets abroad,” in effect permits the warrantless surveillance of Americans and the collection of their data. Caine warned that its loss would “increase risk to the Joint Force, degrade our worldwide combat lethality, and significantly impair U.S. security,” according to a copy of the letter obtained by Politico. The intervention signals White House anxiety about vote counts ahead of the law’s April 20 expiration, with more than a dozen House Republican holdouts citing privacy concerns. Several Democrats are expected to flip from their 2024 “yes” votes amid fears the Trump administration could weaponize the program against immigrants, and **Rep. Andy Biggs (R-Ariz.)** introduced an amendment Monday to shorten the extension to one year.
 - Ahead of the Wednesday vote on whether to reauthorize FISA without any reforms, Drop Site’s Julian Andreone caught up with members of the Congressional Black Caucus to address reporting that, led by **Rep. Greg Meeks (D-NY)**, the group sought to join the Trump administration—in particular, Stephen Miller—in pushing for a swift passage. Just hours before the vote, some CBC members are changing course and backing reforms. The video is available [here](#).
- **State Department accuses Cuba of role in Russia’s war in Ukraine:** The Trump administration told Congress that between 1,000 and 5,000 Cuban nationals are fighting for Russia in Ukraine at any given time, while also supplying “diplomatic and political support for Moscow,” according to a five-page unclassified State Department memo reported on by Axios. The report stops short of concluding Havana officially dispatched “all Cuban fighters,” but states there are “significant indicators that the regime knowingly tolerated, enabled, or selectively facilitated the flow,” and dismisses Cuba’s claim to have prosecuted

traffickers. In response to the report, **Sen. Ted Cruz (R-Texas)** told Axios, “If and when President Trump gets around to replacing” Cuba’s government, “and I believe that will happen sooner rather than later, it will be a very good day for the U.S. and our allies.”

- **Trump admin is ordering the Pentagon to prepare for military operations against Cuba, Zeteo reports:** The Trump administration has quietly directed Pentagon officials and other U.S. government agencies to step up preparations for possible military operations against Cuba, according to three sources familiar with the matter, Zeteo reported Tuesday.
- **ICE pays \$12.2 million for AI surveillance tool that maps immigrants’ daily routines and location:** U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement has awarded a \$12.2 million contract to defense vendor Edge Ops LLC for an artificial intelligence tool called “Project SAFE HAVEN” that uses “persistent passive data collection” to map the “habitual locations, routes, and behavioral patterns” of its targets. It also purports to have the ability to build “profiles” of suspects by scraping data from Wi-Fi connections and mobile devices. The tool was purchased specifically for the Homeland Security Task Force National Coordination Center—a hub coordinating ICE, the Pentagon, and the FBI. Read more about this recent contract, and the expansion of ICE surveillance capacities, in the latest from The Lever, available here.
- **ICE arrests immigrant delivery drivers at California checkpoint:** An “interagency” pilot program at the Camp Pendleton Marine Corps Base in California has resulted in the detention of dozens of rideshare and delivery drivers, according to Capital & Main, with military police at the base’s gates calling Immigration and Customs Enforcement on any non-citizen or non-green card holder and attempting to persuade detainees to leave the United States. Among those caught up in the program is Assim Alkhawaja, a Palestinian man with a pending asylum claim and a valid work permit who was arrested in mid-February while dropping off two Marines at the base, shackled, pressured to voluntarily depart the country, before his community raised over \$10,000 for his bail; another is a Haitian Uber Driver who complained about the exploitative nature of the detention facility, where detainees are made to pay for food, water, and calls to family. Read the full report from Capital & Main here.
- **Thomson Reuters fires employee who dissented against selling data to ICE, lawsuit says:** Thomson Reuters fired legal editor **Billie Little** on March 20, after more than 200 of its employees wrote a letter objecting to the use of the company’s CLEAR database, which contains significant amounts of personal data, by federal immigration authorities, according to a lawsuit filed Tuesday and reported on by 404 Media. Little was singled out for her resistance, and according to her attorneys appears to be the only employee fired for her resistance. Her team argues that the firing violated Oregon’s whistleblower protection law.
- **86-year-old detained by ICE in Louisiana:** An 86-year-old French woman identified only as Marie-Thérèse, who moved to Alabama last year to marry a former U.S. Army colonel she had fallen in love with at a NATO base in France in the 1950s, is being held in a crowded Louisiana detention facility after ICE agents arrested and shackled her on April 1. Marie-Thérèse’s husband died in January 2026 before she had obtained a green card, leaving her immigration status unresolved. Her son told Ouest-France that her family fears for her

life, given her heart and back conditions. “Given her health, she won’t last a month in such conditions of detention,” he said.

- **Tennessee passes act that would penalize student protest:** The Tennessee General Assembly passed the Charlie Kirk Act on Monday, “free speech” legislation that could subject students and faculty to suspension or expulsion for staging walkouts and using oversized signs during speaking events on campus. The bill also offers protections against disinvitation for individuals with certain views, including opposition to abortion, homosexuality, and “transgender behavior.” It also allows student organizations to deny membership or leadership roles to students who conflict with their “lifestyle.” The measure passed along partisan lines and needs only **Gov. Bill Lee’s** signature to become law.
- **New poll shows Cori Bush tied with Wesley Bell in Missouri Democratic primary:** A new poll commissioned by former **Rep. Cori Bush** and conducted by HIT Strategies shows Bush and incumbent **Wesley Bell (D-Mo.)** statistically tied among likely Democratic primary voters in Missouri’s 1st congressional district, with Bell at 44% and Bush at 40%, within the survey’s 5.4% margin of error. The poll, conducted February 19–23 among 401 likely Democratic primary voters, also found Bush holds higher overall favorability than Bell—52% to 45%—and that AIPAC, a major backer of Bell’s 2024 campaign, carries a 40% unfavorable rating among district Democrats, while ICE is 86% unfavorable to the same demographic.
- **Mills deflects genocide question, points to African countries instead:** Maine governor and senatorial candidate **Janet Mills (D)** was asked at a campaign event on Tuesday if she thinks Israel is committing a genocide in Gaza. After opening with a condemnation of events of October 7, using the word “horrific” to describe it and what has transpired in Gaza, she refused to answer the question directly. Instead she pointed to one African country with a widely reported genocide and two with historic genocides. “There’s a genocide right now going on in Sudan. Rwanda...there’s a genocide. There’s a genocide going on in Somalia.... There’s a lot we have to be concerned about, a lot on our plate.”

Other International News

- **Milei’s disability agency at center of campaign corruption, report says:** Argentina’s National Disability Agency (ANDIS) is at the center of an alleged kickback scheme in which pharmaceutical companies received government contracts in exchange for bribes worth roughly 3% of contract value, bribes paid to officials close to President Javier Milei, according to *Página/12*. One defendant has even implicated Milei’s sister, Karina, in the scheme. Milei himself is accused of having a campaign event financed by the Kovalivker family, which owns a pharmaceutical distributor and is implicated in the case, and is reportedly under investigation. Read more on this story [here](#).
- **U.S. military kills four in second Pacific boat strike in two days:** The U.S. military struck a boat in the eastern Pacific Ocean on Tuesday, killing four people in the 50th such strike since early September, bringing the total death toll to at least 174, according to U.S. Southern Command. The command cited unspecified intelligence and said the vessel had

been traveling on “known narco-trafficking routes,” releasing a 16-second video showing the boat exploding, but provided no evidence of drug smuggling.

- **School shooting injures 16 in Turkey:** An 18-year-old opened fire with a shotgun at a vocational high school he had once attended in Siverek, Şanlıurfa province, on Tuesday, wounding 16 people—including 10 students, four teachers, a canteen employee, and a police officer—before killing himself. Five of the wounded were transferred to a hospital in the provincial capital due to the severity of their injuries. The motive for the shooting remains unclear.
- **Mexico’s Sheinbaum rebukes Trump for his immigration policy:** Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum once again noted her disapproval of her northern neighbor’s immigration policy during a daily press briefing, calling the deaths of Mexican nationals in U.S. immigration detention “unacceptable” on Tuesday. Her remarks come a day after 49-year-old Alejandro Cabrera Clemente died at a Louisiana ICE facility, the fifteenth such death in little over a year. She announced she had opened investigations into all 15 deaths, instructed Mexican consulates to visit U.S. detention centers daily, and said she was bringing the cases before the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, and was also considering an appeal to the United Nations. “We are going to defend Mexicans at every level,” Sheinbaum told the press, adding that “there are many Mexicans whose only crime is not having papers.”
- **Spain approves amnesty program for half a million undocumented immigrants:** Spain’s government approved a program on Tuesday that will allow up to 500,000 undocumented immigrants to apply for legal status. Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez fast-tracked the measure via decree to bypass a parliament where his left-wing government lacks a majority, after a previous amnesty bill failed because of parliamentary objections. Eligible applicants must have arrived before January 1, prove at least five months of residency, and have no criminal record. They will receive a one-year work and residency permit, which can be renewed into a longer-term status. Sánchez called the move “an act of justice and a necessity,” arguing that immigrants have helped Spain become “the fastest-growing economy in Europe.”
- **Greece accused of recruiting migrants as “enforcers” to pressure other migrants out:** Greek police have been recruiting detained migrants to carry out violent illegal pushbacks along the Evros river border with Turkey since at least 2020, according to a new investigation from the BBC. Witnesses described masked units stripping new arrivals, robbing them, and beating them, with some migrants reporting sexual violence and death threats at the hands of their masked captors. The mercenary migrants were reportedly compensated for their services with Arab or Turkish currencies, and occasionally with sexual services, according to one source. The BBC’s full investigation is available [here](#).
- **Hundreds of former European ministers, diplomats call for suspension of EU-Israel Association Agreement:** A group of 350 former European ministers, ambassadors, and senior officials has urged the European Union to suspend the EU-Israel Association Agreement over Israel’s systematic violations of international law in Palestine. “With the world attention focussed elsewhere, Israel under the cloak of illegal military operations in Iran and Lebanon, has pursued the subjugation of Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank,

including East Jerusalem, by doubling down on its illegal occupation policy, the signatories said in a joint statement on Wednesday.

- **Venezuela’s interim president calls for full sanctions relief:** Venezuelan interim President Delcy Rodríguez called on Tuesday for the United States to lift all sanctions on Venezuela, writing on X that “We reiterate the need to advance towards a Venezuela free of sanctions, as a means of providing institutional legal certainty to investors coming to our country—a setting where they are guaranteed sustained investment over time and a forward-looking perspective.” She made this statement on the same day the U.S. Treasury Department announced it would be easing a small spate of restrictions on Venezuela’s banking system, by issuing licenses that would allow the country’s central bank and several state-owned financial institutions to make transactions.
- **Hundreds of Rohingya refugees and Bangladeshi nationals missing after boat capsizes:** Approximately 250 Rohingya refugees and Bangladeshi nationals are missing after a boat capsized in the Andaman Sea, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees reported on Tuesday. The boat reportedly left Bangladesh and was en route to Malaysia. The Bangladesh Coast Guard rescued nine survivors on April 9, including one woman found floating on drums and logs; six of the nine are alleged traffickers and have been detained. One survivor, Rafiqul Islam, told AFP he had been lured aboard by traffickers who promised him work in Malaysia, that the vessel travelled for four days before capsizing, and that 25 to 30 people died from suffocation and overcrowding before he spent 36 hours floating in open water before rescue.
- **U.S. to send third-country deportees to DRC. this week:** The United States is set to send between 37 and 45 deportees—all nationals of countries other than Congo, including people from Colombia, Peru, Chile, and Guatemala—to the Democratic Republic of Congo by Friday under a third-country deportation agreement announced on April 5, with the deportees to be housed in a hotel near Kinshasa’s main airport for 10 to 15 days, Reuters reported Tuesday.
- **Rival Libyan factions participate in U.S. special forces exercises together for the first time:** Forces from Libya’s eastern and western rival administrations participated jointly in U.S. AFRICOM’s “Flintlock” special operations exercises in the central city of Sirte on Tuesday, the first such joint military event between the former civil war adversaries, with more than 30 countries taking part. The exercises come days after the two sides agreed to Libya’s first unified budget in more than a decade, marking a notable thaw between the Tripoli-based Government of National Unity and Khalifa Haftar’s eastern Libyan National Army, which attempted to seize the capital in 2019–2020.
- **Somali forces kill 27 al-Shabaab militants in Jubbaland:** Somalia’s armed forces and regional security forces killed 27 al-Shabaab militants, including “key members” of the group, in a “large-scale operation” in the Lower and Middle Jubba regions of the country, Reuters reported Tuesday. The operation was supported by airstrikes from undisclosed international partners, the military said. The U.S. military has previously conducted airstrikes in support of the Somali government’s military actions.
- **Russian strikes hit Dnipro and Izmail, killing civilians and hitting foreign-flagged ships:** A Russian missile strike killed at least five civilians and wounded more than two

dozen others in the southeastern Ukrainian city of Dnipro on Tuesday, according to Reuters. At least 10 of the hospitalized were in severe condition, and an infrastructure facility was also damaged in the strike. Russian drones also struck Ukraine's Izmail port in the Odesa region overnight, damaging a Panama-flagged vessel and parts of the port's infrastructure, and a separate strike hit the Liberian-flagged merchant vessel "Lady Maris" as it travelled through a maritime corridor to load corn, Ukrainian officials reported Tuesday. The Lady Maris reached the port of Chornomorsk after its crew extinguished a fire on board.

- **Accusations of fraud in Peru's presidential race:** Latest figures from Peru's election authority place leftist candidate Roberto Sánchez in second place, which would advance him to the runoff. Presidential candidate Rafael López Aliaga, a wealthy businessman and leader of the ultraconservative Popular Renewal party, who had been in second, called for the annulment of the April 2026 general election, warning he could push for "insurgency" if authorities do not comply. He accused National Jury of Elections president Roberto Burneo of complicity in alleged electoral sabotage tied to logistics delays, a claim other candidates have also raised, but Burneo has rejected. Four-time candidate Keiko Fujimori, who placed first but failed to secure a majority, will proceed to the runoff.

More from Drop Site

- **Weekly Livestream:** Drop Site co-founder Jeremy Scahill and Middle East editor Sharif Abdel Kouddous host veteran Middle East analyst Rami Khouri to discuss the latest in Iran, cover the most recent developments in the ceasefire, and review the situation in Lebanon. The full livestream is available **here**:
- **Panel on upcoming congressional renewal of warrantless surveillance:** Drop Site's Capitol Hill correspondent, Julian Andreone, hosted a conversation about the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act and the state of mass surveillance in America, in anticipation of Congress' potential reauthorization of Section 702 of that act, which allows intelligence agencies to sweep up vast troves of personal data without a warrant in the pursuit of "security." Andreone is joined by Liza Goitein of the Brennan Center, Sean Vitka of Demand Progress, and political commentator Jess Craven. That panel discussion is available **here**:
- **Global Sumud Flotilla's Spring Mission commences:** Drop Site contributor **Noa Avishag Schnall** sent a video dispatch from the launch day of the Global Sumud Flotilla's Spring Mission to Gaza, which launched from Barcelona on April 12 with 39 vessels and over 1,000 participants. The flotilla aims to break Israel's naval blockade of Gaza. That video is available **here**: