

Trump's crypto profits; Progressive victory in Colorado; Ethnic cleansing in Sudan

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Iran and Ceasefire

- **Indirect technical talks in Doha:** Indirect negotiations between the United States and Iran continued in Doha on Wednesday, with Qatari and Pakistani mediators facilitating technical discussions on implementing the interim memorandum of understanding.

- Qatar's Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani met U.S. negotiators, Special Envoy Steve Witkoff and Trump's son-in-law Jared Kushner on Wednesday, with the Emir's office saying they discussed the "progress of the negotiations" between Washington and Tehran as well as the situation in Lebanon and the "importance of consolidating the ceasefire."

- Meanwhile, U.S. President Donald Trump told reporters the talks are going "very well" and described the meetings as "very good."

- Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Kazem Gharibabadi participated in a trilateral meeting with Qatar and Pakistan, and said the Doha meetings were focused on implementing the interim agreement rather than negotiating a new deal.

- **Iran will discuss frozen assets with Qatar, not the U.S.:** Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmacil Baghaei [said](#) on Tuesday that Iran will hold talks with Qatar in Doha on Wednesday to discuss implementing its memorandum of understanding with the United States, particularly the release of its frozen assets, but that the Iranian delegation has no plans to meet the American delegation "in the coming days."

- Baghaei said the talks would focus on Paragraph 11 of the MOU, which covers unfreezing Iran's restricted funds, stressing that what matters to Tehran is "gaining access to its funds and using them as it sees fit."

- Qatar's foreign ministry spokesperson, Majed Al-Ansari, officially confirmed today that the \$6 billion in frozen Iranian funds has not yet been transferred to Tehran; Qatari and U.S. officials have maintained that the frozen funds remain in Qatari accounts.

- Separately, Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian said recent agreements have enabled continued Iranian oil exports, eased some financial and foreign exchange restrictions, and created new opportunities for economic cooperation.
- **Iran and Oman proceed with fee-collection plan for Strait of Hormuz:** Iran and Oman are [moving forward](#) with a proposal to collect fees from ships transiting the Strait of Hormuz, despite U.S. objections, the New York Times reported on Tuesday, citing Iranian and diplomatic officials.
 - Oman reportedly proposed a system modeled on the Straits of Malacca and Singapore, where shipping companies “voluntarily” contribute to navigation and safety services. Iranian officials, however, say the payments would be mandatory.
 - U.S. officials have received and are reviewing the Omani proposal, and are expected to offer revisions rather than rejecting the deal outright.
 - The current U.S.-Iran framework agreement only guarantees free passage through the Strait for 60 days, after which Iran and Oman are expected to negotiate a longer-term arrangement for shipping through the Strait.
 - Iran’s Parliament Speaker and diplomat Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf [claimed](#) later on Tuesday that Tehran had reached an agreement “on all legal and service-related matters” governing maritime services in the Strait, while insisting Iran would not cede its sovereignty over the waterway, which he called a “divine gift” given to the country during its recent conflict with Israel and the United States.
- **Araghchi warns Israel after Katz says Khamenei is “marked for death”:** Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi warned Wednesday that “any threat against our People and Leadership will receive Immediate Powerful Response” after Israeli Defense Minister Israel Katz said Iran’s Supreme Leader, Mojtaba Khamenei, was “marked for death.” In a [post](#) on X, Araghchi said the terms of the Islamabad MOU were “crystal clear and public for all to see,” adding that U.S. President Donald Trump had committed Washington to “muzzling its pets in Tel Aviv” and warning that “if they ignore their master, Iran will school them.” Katz [said](#) on Monday that Israel could find itself at war with Iran “tomorrow,” adding that the Israeli military had been instructed to prepare for an independent operation against Iran if necessary.
- **Report: President Trump considered reviving war with Iran:** President Trump [weighed](#) resuming full-scale war with Iran, holding multiple discussions with War Secretary Pete Hegseth and Joint Chiefs Chairman Gen. Dan Caine on new military strikes, the Wall Street Journal reported on Tuesday, but decided to continue diplomatic talks for now.

· **Iranian Parliament Speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf talks Lebanon, oil, nuclear deal:** In a wide-ranging interview with Iranian state media on Tuesday, Parliament Speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf discussed the progress of the deal, its consequences for the region's energy industries, and gave additional details concerning the Iranian delegation's priorities ahead of a second round of negotiations.

· Ghalibaf **reiterated** that Iran would not negotiate a final deal with the U.S. until Washington delivers on the core commitments it made under the MOU, pointing particularly to Washington's failure to secure a total ceasefire in Lebanon, Iran's demands that it allow for the sanction-free export of its oil and petroleum products, and the release of its frozen funds.

· Ghalibaf **stressed** Lebanon in particular, saying that the memorandum "seeks Lebanon's independence," whereas the framework agreement between Lebanon and Israel, mediated by the U.S., "seeks to normalize Lebanon's relations with the Zionist regime," and that it would put the Lebanese army "in service of the Zionist regime" by making it responsible for Israel's security.

· Ghalibaf also **accused** U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio of working to undermine the memorandum of understanding during his recent tour of the Gulf, and of attempting to rally Gulf states against Iran.

· Ghalibaf **emphasized** that nuclear enrichment is Iran's "legitimate right," adding that Iran would continue to abide by the Non-Proliferation Treaty. He also argued that "domestic strength and a strong position on the ground" would be the country's only guarantees of safety, and that it would not negotiate its missile capabilities.

· In the interview, Ghalibaf **claimed** that in the "10-12 days" since Iran had lifted its blockade, it had exported more than 40 million barrels of oil.

· **Vance claims U.S. is using Iran deal to "refill" the oil market:** Vice President JD Vance said the Trump administration is using the memorandum that ended the war with Iran "to sort of refill" the world's oil supply during an appearance on the Michael Knowles Show on Monday.

· Vance **said** the U.S. has two options going forward: either a long-term deal requiring "a significant change" in Iranian behavior or banking its gains from its military campaign against the country while keeping renewed strikes on the table. Both options, he said, remain "very much in play."

- The vice president also claimed that oil traffic through the Strait had “reached its pre-war height.” “We’re seeing more oil come out of the Strait of Hormuz, and some days actually more oil coming out of the Strait than came out before the war even started,” he said.
- **UN says evacuation of stranded Hormuz seafarers remains suspended:** The evacuation of roughly 8,500 seafarers **stranded** in and around the Strait of Hormuz remains suspended until security guarantees are in place, according to International Maritime Organization Secretary-General Arsenio Dominguez.
 - Dominguez said on Tuesday that 2,500 seafarers were evacuated before operations were paused.
 - Dominguez also came out **against** mandatory tolls on ships transiting the Strait of Hormuz, calling the arrangement unlawful, but proposed a voluntary funding system—like that which governs the Strait of Malacca—as an alternative.

Lebanon

- **Israeli shelling and demolitions in southern Lebanon despite “ceasefire”:** An Israeli drone **dropped** three stun grenades over the southern Lebanese town of Yater on Wednesday afternoon, while Israeli forces also opened fire at a civilian vehicle near the spring of Ibl al-Saqi, according to Lebanon’s National News Agency. In Sour (Tyre), Israeli artillery shelling targeted the outskirts of Beit Yahoun. Israeli forces also **carried out** overnight demolitions of several homes in the Beit Yahoun-Hadatha area and in the town of Tayri in Bint Jbeil district.
- **Israel claims it killed a Hezbollah fighter in southern Lebanon as it delays withdrawal:** The Israeli military **claimed** that it killed a Hezbollah fighter in southern Lebanon on Tuesday, as Israeli media reported that Israel’s withdrawal from two “pilot zones,” in Zawtar and the Froun-Ghandourieh area, has been delayed pending agreement on a U.S. oversight mechanism.
 - Israeli officials told Lebanon that leaving the zones “will take time,” a Lebanese military official told The National.
 - On Wednesday morning, Israeli Defense Minister Israel Katz vowed to keep Israeli troops “indefinitely” within its “security zones” in Gaza, Syria, and Lebanon. “We will not withdraw from the security zones,” Katz said.
- **Lebanese President defends Washington “framework” amid widespread criticism:** Lebanese President Joseph Aoun **defended** the Washington framework signed with Israel on

Tuesday, saying it is “not an agreement but a framework” that includes provisions for an Israeli withdrawal, the return of displaced people and prisoners, and the repatriation of the remains of Lebanese held in Israel, NNA reported. Aoun argued Lebanon “did not compromise its judicial, political or field principles,” and called on critics to present alternatives.

- He also urged opponents not to take the dispute to the streets or portray the outcome as “surrender and humiliation.” Aoun praised Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri for establishing two “red lines” during the negotiations—preventing sectarian strife and protecting the Lebanese army; Berri had denounced the framework on Monday, calling it a set of “diktats.”

Palestine

- **Israeli strike kills two in Al-Mawasi:** An Israeli strike on the Al-Mawasi refugee camp in Khan Younis overnight Wednesday **killed** two people, and injured several others, according to WAFA.
- **Israeli forces detain 20 Palestinians in West Bank, including five women and a journalist:** Israeli forces **detained** at least 20 Palestinians across the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem, between Tuesday evening and Wednesday morning, according to the Palestinian Prisoners’ Society. Those detained included five women and a Palestinian journalist from Bethlehem.
 - The group said Israeli authorities have intensified raids since the start of the war on Gaza, with more than 24,000 arrests recorded in the occupied West Bank during that period. It added that the number of Palestinian women held in Israeli prisons has risen to 99, while the number of detained journalists has reached 42, including two held under enforced disappearance.
 - Separately, Israeli police **attacked** mourners at a funeral near Bab Al-Asbat in Jerusalem, according to WAFA, firing tear-gas canisters and rubber-coated metal bullets at the protesters.
- **Israeli police kill Palestinian man in Lydd, sixth this year:** Israeli police shot and **killed** a Palestinian man in his twenties, in the city of Lydd, inside the 1948 territories on Wednesday, WAFA reported.

- The man, who was identified as Sami Ahmed Ja'sous, was the sixth person killed by police in the city since the start of the year, amid growing reports of excessive force by Israeli police in Palestinian towns.

- Separately on Wednesday, two more young men were killed in Basma and Shfaram, bringing the total number of killings in Palestinian communities inside Israel since the beginning of the year to 139.

- **Report: Israeli plan to herd Palestinians in Gaza into controlled “shelters” set to begin within weeks:** Israel is [preparing](#) to push Palestinians into fenced “humanitarian shelters” in areas outside Hamas governance, policed by a foreign force, while its military deepens its occupation of the rest of Gaza, according to the Likud-aligned Israeli outlet Israel Hayom.

- Under the plan, unarmed civilians would be directed to a zone in Tel Al-Sultan, near Rafah. A multinational force, the ISF proposed by Trump's “Board of Peace,” would deploy to the area from a newly built base, equipped to police the zones, while the Israeli military would “continue to maintain and deepen its hold” beyond the “Yellow Line.”

- The camp/base for the force “has already been built,” the report claims, and the board has “begun identifying sites” for logistics warehouses. Buildup in the area was also apparent in an image posted by the board, which showed tactical vehicles arriving at an area logistics base on June 30.

- A political source told Israel Hayom: “We are maneuvering within the American constraints, increasing the pace of targeted killings while remaining below the threshold of international criticism—and this will continue as long as Hamas is unwilling to disarm.”

- The plan matches what Drop Site has previously exposed through leaked documents: a surveilled, checkpoint-controlled “planned community” in Rafah designed to force Palestinians into what amounts to an Israeli panopticon, tracked and screened as a condition of receiving aid. **Drop Site's full report on that buildup is available [here](#).**

- Separately on Tuesday, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu [said](#) that “voluntary immigration” from Gaza remains on the agenda when asked whether his government was pursuing this policy by a panelist on a television program, receiving applause for his response.

- **Guterres calls on countries to cover \$100 million UNRWA funding gap:** UN Secretary-General António Guterres [called on](#) countries Tuesday to cover a \$100 million funding gap for UNRWA, the UN agency for Palestinian refugees, warning that millions of people are at risk due to the shortfall. Guterres cited sweeping restrictions imposed by Israel on the agency's work throughout the occupied Palestinian territory, along with dire conditions in Gaza, settler violence in the occupied West Bank, and Israeli attacks on Lebanon, saying further funding cuts could “push conditions beyond breaking point.”

- He reiterated the agency's importance, and countered what he called continued efforts to undermine the agency through “disinformation, smear campaigns, legislative actions, operational restrictions, diplomatic roadblocks and more.”

- The agency's funding was curtailed after Israel, in 2024, alleged—without substantiating its claims—that a small number of UNRWA employees participated in the October 7th attacks. The U.S. stopped sending money to the agency in response.

- Trump's “Board of Peace” stated that “UNRWA has no place in the new Gaza,” in a [post](#) on X Wednesday.

- **Spain takes in more Palestinian medical refugees:** Spain [welcomed](#) 100 Palestinians, including 20 children, along with their families on Monday so that they could receive medical treatment, Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez announced on Tuesday, the country's sixth such evacuation from Gaza.

- “No human being, and, of course, no child, should have to endure the horror being lived through in Gaza,” Sánchez wrote on X.

- **Israel levels displacement tents in Beit Lahia:** Israeli forces destroyed a cluster of tents and homes in the northern Gaza town of Beit Lahia on Monday evening, ordering residents to flee with ten minutes' notice before flattening everything they owned. The area sits about a kilometer from the “Yellow Line,” the position Israeli forces hold inside Gaza, and comes under daily shelling, Drop Site contributor Abdel Qader Sabbah reported.

- A resident told Drop Site that Israeli intelligence phoned and gave his family minutes to evacuate. “We left with nothing. We left quickly, and that was it. In only ten minutes, what can you take? All our belongings remained and were buried.”

- Another resident described an F-16 airstrike as “not a strike,” but “an earthquake.” Addressing where his family could safely go, he said there is nowhere left. “You go to the port, the ‘safe zone,’ there are still strikes. There is no safe place in the Gaza Strip. ...They tell you it's a safe place. This is all a lie.”

- [Watch Abdel Qader Sabbah's full video dispatch here.](#)

U.S. News

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

- **Primary results:**

- Progressive and democratic socialist **Melat Kiros** [defeated](#) incumbent **Rep. Diana DeGette** in Tuesday's Democratic primary to represent the state's 1st congressional district, which covers much of the Denver area. The 29-year-old Kiros, an attorney and doctoral student, was born in the same year DeGette was first elected to Congress, and was able to overcome the incumbent despite a last-minute infusion of cash into DeGette's campaign from Big Tech and pro-Israel interests (reported on by Drop Site, [here](#)). In her victory speech, Kiros described being fired from her law firm after publishing a letter defending pro-Palestinian student protestors, saying, "I didn't flinch because I stood by every word, and I always will."

- Colorado Attorney General **Phil Weiser** upset U.S. Sen. **Michael Bennet** in the state's Democratic gubernatorial primary. The state has been represented by a Democratic governor since 2007, making Weiser the heavy favorite to succeed Governor **Jared Polis**. Bennet's campaign received millions of dollars in donations from former New York City mayor Michael Bloomberg, and he was initially favored to win the race. Weiser, who initially showed little difference in his platform from Bennet, pivoted left toward the end of the campaign, which may have helped secure his victory.

- Former governor and current Sen. **John Hickenlooper** defeated a challenge from progressive State Senator **Julie Gonzales** in the Democratic Senate primary, a race in which Gonzales was outspent 8 to 1. Gonzales campaigned on housing affordability, immigrants' rights, climate protection and securing universal healthcare. She called for abolishing ICE. Hickenlooper will now face Republican state Sen. **Mark Baisley** in November's general election.

- **Supreme Court issues more decisions:**

- **Strikes down Trump's bid to end birthright citizenship:** The Supreme Court [ruled](#) 6-3 Tuesday that President Donald Trump's executive order attempting to deny automatic citizenship to children born in the U.S. to foreign nationals violates the 14th Amendment. Chief Justice **John Roberts** wrote for the majority, joined by Justices

Amy Coney Barrett, Elena Kagan and Ketanji Brown Jackson, that children born to parents unlawfully or temporarily present are “subject to the jurisdiction” of the U.S. and are citizens at birth under the Citizenship Clause. Justice **Brett Kavanaugh** concurred in part but disagreed that the order violated the 14th Amendment, while Justices **Samuel Alito, Neil Gorsuch, and Clarence Thomas** dissented. Drop Site’s **Julian Andreone** [asked](#) members of Congress about the ruling.

- **Lifts limits on party campaign spending:** The Supreme Court [ruled](#) 6-3 along ideological lines Tuesday that federal limits on coordinated party expenditures violate the First Amendment, striking down caps on party spending in *National Republican Senatorial Committee v. Federal Election Commission*. The ruling overruled a 2001 precedent and is expected to help Republicans in the midterm elections by undercutting an advantage Democrats have in using their small-dollar donations to reduce television advertising rates.

- **Rules states can ban trans girls from girls’ school sports:** The Supreme Court [ruled](#) Tuesday that states can ban transgender girls from girls’ school sports teams, upholding West Virginia’s ban in *West Virginia v. B.P.J.* and a similar Idaho law in *Little v. Hecox*. The ruling is expected to empower the anti-transgender political movement in its fights over bathrooms, IDs, and gender-affirming care.

- **Trump earned nearly \$1.2 billion from crypto businesses last year, filing shows:** President Donald Trump [took in](#) nearly \$1.2 billion from his crypto businesses last year, according to a federal disclosure filing released Tuesday with the Office of Government Ethics, with more than \$500 million from World Liberty Financial’s token sales and more than \$600 million from CIC Digital LLC’s sale of Trump-branded meme coins. Both the tokens and coins have since plunged in value, and the 927-page filing shows Trump’s overseas property business also grew significantly, including deals in the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Romania and Qatar as those countries separately negotiated tariffs and military aid with the U.S.

- Forbes estimates Trump’s net worth has grown to \$6 billion from \$2.3 billion in 2024, and Mar-a-Lago revenue rose 50% last year to \$77 million.

- **House votes down Tlaib’s Lebanon War Powers Resolution:** Rep. **Rashida Tlaib**’s second Lebanon war powers resolution [failed](#) in a 189-235 vote on Tuesday.

- The measure sought to limit President Trump’s unilateral authority to involve U.S. forces in hostilities in Lebanon, and received backing from House leadership.

- Twenty-two Democrats, including pro-Israel stalwarts like Rep. **Josh Gottheimer** (D-N.J.) and **Jared Moskowitz** (D-Fla.), joined 212 Republicans in voting against the bill. Two Republicans, Reps. **Thomas Massie** (R-Ky.) and **Lauren Boebert** (R-Colo.), voted in favor. The vote marks a major shift from earlier this month, when 117 Democrats opposed a similar measure.

- **House Republicans block amendments targeting U.S. arms transfers to Israel:** The Republican-led House Rules Committee **blocked** an amendment to the 2027 National Defense Authorization Act from Rep. **Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez** (D-N.Y.), ruling it not “in order”; as a result, it will not reach the House floor for a vote.

- The amendment would have strengthened conditions on both offensive and defensive U.S. military aid to Israel. It required that any Defense Department funds used for foreign military aid in fiscal year 2027 strictly comply with international humanitarian law and barred transfers to countries blocking US or UN humanitarian aid to civilians.

- Rep. **Rashida Tlaib** (D-Mich.) also filed 26 amendments to the FY2027 NDAA, including one that would impose a total U.S. arms embargo on any country facing war crimes or genocide proceedings before the International Criminal Court or the International Court of Justice, a category that would include Israel. That amendment was also ruled not “in order.”

- The Rules Committee also rejected a similar amendment, sponsored by Reps. **Rashida Tlaib**, **Thomas Massie** (R-Ky.), **Ro Khanna** (Calif.), **Jim McGovern** (D-Mass.), and **Jesús “Chuy” García** (D-Ill.). That bipartisan amendment sought to strike Section 219 (formerly Section 224), which would create a “United States-Israel Defense Technology Cooperation Initiative” merging the two countries’ defense technology, intelligence, and research, an integration critics say no other U.S. ally has.

- Rep. **Thomas Massie’s** amendment, which would **strike** \$3.3 billion in foreign aid to Israel from the State Department’s 2027 bill, was ruled in order. Tlaib has committed to vote for the bill, as have Reps. **Ro Khanna**, **Ocasio-Cortez**, **Greg Casar** (D-Texas), and **Ilhan Omar** (D-Minn.). Other members discussed the amendment with Drop Site Capitol Hill correspondent Julian Andreone; **see their responses [here](#)**.

- Other Israel-related amendments were given the green light, including an amendment **proposed** by Reps. **Josh Gottheimer** and **Claudia Tenney** (R-N.Y.), which would seek to curtail the enforcement of **International Criminal Court** arrest warrants—likely a response to warrants on Israeli politicians issued by the court—and an amendment from Rep. **Andy Ogles** (R-Tenn.), which allows the Defense

Department to participate in international exhibitions only if Israeli companies are allowed to participate. Both will receive floor votes.

- **Himes addresses Thiel group membership:** A recent report from Wired found that Rep. **Jim Himes** (Conn.), the top Democrat on the House Intelligence Committee, which oversees private surveillance contractors like Palantir, is among 113 powerful figures on a leaked membership list from Dialog—**Peter Thiel's** invitation-only secret society. Drop Site's **Julian Andreone** questioned Himes about his membership. Himes said he attended one conference more than a decade ago and downplayed the notion that Dialog is a “secret society,” decrying the left's criticisms as “conspiratorial.” **Their full interaction is available [here](#).**

- **House votes to compel release of sexual misconduct settlement records:** The House unanimously [approved](#) a measure Tuesday requiring public release of records showing which House members used taxpayer dollars to settle sexual misconduct charges against them. The resolution, offered by Rep. **Thomas Massie** (R-Ky.), directs the House Ethics Committee and the Office of Congressional Workplace Rights to produce the information within 60 days, and follows the resignations earlier this year of Reps. **Tony Gonzales** (R-Texas) and **Eric Swalwell** (D-Calif.) amid sexual misconduct allegations.

- A March subpoena from the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee had already revealed the federal government paid more than \$300,000 to settle claims against House lawmakers or their offices before Congress ended that practice in 2018.

- **Harris courts progressives, pro-Palestinian activists amid 2028 speculation:** Former Vice President **Kamala Harris** privately [called](#) New York City Mayor **Zohran Mamdani** last Thursday and has held closed-door meetings with prominent progressives, including pro-Palestinian activists, according to Axios. The outreach, seen as groundwork for a potential 2028 presidential run, has included meetings with Rep. **Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez** (D-N.Y.) in April, Uncommitted Movement co-founder **Abbas Alawieh** last week in Detroit, and Democratic National Committee member **James Zogby**.

- Harris's 2024 failure was fueled in significant part by her refusal to distance herself from Biden's conduct and policy during the Gaza genocide. Some pro-Palestinian voices expressed skepticism that Harris could win back Arab American and left-wing voters without major concessions, with one asking “Why should we trust her now?”

- Harris remains near the top of early 2028 primary polls despite doubts from the left, center, and donors following her 2024 loss.

Other International News

- **Amnesty report finds that Sudan's RSF committed ethnic cleansing in El-Fasher:** A new report by Amnesty International found that Sudan's paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) committed crimes against humanity and ethnic cleansing during its 2024–2025 campaign to seize the city of El-Fasher in northern Darfur.

- The group said it interviewed 247 victims and witnesses and found that RSF forces systematically attacked settlements around El-Fasher housing the Zaghawa community, with fighters burning homes after residents fled.

- During the final RSF offensive on El-Fasher in October 2025, Amnesty stated that “hundreds were executed, and many others were tortured or detained” as they attempted to flee, noting that human rights violations were systematic and that “those in positions of authority knew, or should have known, what was occurring, and failed to stop it or hold anyone accountable.”

- Separately, a report from the Yale School of Public Health's Humanitarian Research Lab published on Tuesday [found](#) that the Rapid Support Forces have intensified attacks on civilian infrastructure in El Obeid, worsening an already severe humanitarian crisis. Researchers identified damage consistent with aerial bombardment at at least eight fuel stations and new damage to the city's electrical substation between May 25 and June 25, triggering a citywide blackout of at least four days, shutting down water pumps, and forcing the closure of emergency departments and a kidney dialysis center due to fuel shortages.

- The report also found more than 700 new temporary shelters at displacement camps over the past month, pointing to a sharp influx of displaced civilians, and warned that El Obeid, a city of more than 500,000 people, faces worsening food and water shortages as RSF forces tighten their siege.

- **Russia shuts down rail crossings with EU border states:** Russia suspended rail traffic through some of its last remaining border crossings with the European Union, halting the movement of people, vehicles, goods and cargo by rail with Finland, Estonia and Latvia as of July 1.

- Moscow described the closures as “temporary” in a public statement but gave no explanation or timeline for reopening, while formally notifying the Baltic states of the move.

- The decision to halt crossings comes amid an increasing campaign of Ukrainian strikes targeting major urban areas in Russia and as Russia expands military infrastructure near NATO's northeastern flank, including reported new barracks, ammunition depots and logistics hubs near Finland, Norway and the Baltic states.
- **Cuba says U.S. talks show “no progress” amid new threats:** Cuban Foreign Minister Bruno Rodríguez [said](#) negotiations with Washington have hit a wall, accusing U.S. officials of pairing “generally respectful” talks with “constant threats,” coercive measures, and attacks on Cuba's sovereignty.
 - Rodríguez said the U.S. was also trying to derail a UN debate over Washington's decades-long trade embargo, which has been in place since the 1960s, as the Trump administration escalates its current energy blockade on the country.
- **New EU report says world's oceans hit hottest June on record:** The world's oceans [recorded](#) their warmest June ever observed, with average global sea-surface temperatures reaching 21°C, according to the European Union's Copernicus Marine Service.
 - The agency said June's temperatures surpassed the previous records set in 2023 and 2024, capping a first half of 2026 marked by “persistently elevated” sea-surface temperatures and widespread marine heatwaves. Copernicus said marine heatwaves expanded through the first six months of the year, eventually affecting roughly 82 percent of the global ocean, with the Mediterranean, central North Atlantic, and equatorial Pacific among the key hotspots.
- **Syria names lawmakers for new transitional parliament:** Syrian authorities [announced](#) 70 new lawmakers appointed by interim President Ahmed al-Sharaa to complete a 210-member transitional parliament, clearing the way for the parliament to convene its first session next week.
 - The chamber will have limited powers under the presidential system Sharaa has established since ousting Bashar al-Assad in 2024; two-thirds of its members were chosen last year through regional electoral colleges formed under a committee appointed by Sharaa.
 - A temporary constitution introduced in March 2025 granted parliament limited powers under the system put in place following the collapse of the previous government and the new parliament temporarily excludes representation from the Druze-majority area of Sweida which has remained outside the control of Damascus since clashes last year.

- **Taliban says it struck Pakistani territory as border conflict escalates:** Afghanistan's Taliban government [said](#) Wednesday it launched air strikes on Pakistani territory in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provinces, targeting what it said were members of an ISIL affiliate, while Pakistan's military said it intercepted four "rudimentary drones" launched by Taliban forces into Balochistan.

- Pakistan warned that continued provocation from the Afghan Taliban "would receive a befitting response which would cost them heavily," and the Taliban's defense ministry posted on X describing the strikes as retaliation for deadly Pakistani air attacks on eastern Afghanistan earlier in the week.

- **Firebombings target homes linked to Greece's governing party:** Unknown attackers [firebombed](#) three residential buildings tied to Greece's ruling center-right New Democracy party in Thessaloniki before dawn Wednesday, wounding five people, police said. A New Democracy parliamentary candidate and her mother were among those injured, both suffering burns after gas canisters were set alight outside the buildings.

- A spokesman for the party said that the bombings "were a proper terrorist attack on the homes of New Democracy members," adding that "those who carried it out aimed to kill."

- **Cepeda says he won't recognize de la Espriella as president over sovereignty concerns:** Colombian presidential candidate Iván Cepeda [said](#) Wednesday he will not recognize fellow candidate Abelardo de la Espriella as president unless de la Espriella renounces his U.S. citizenship and clarifies whether he has collaborated with U.S. security or intelligence agencies.

- Cepeda also noted in his statement de la Espriella's past work for disgraced businessman and convicted money launderer Alex Saab and his support from President Donald Trump.

- He demanded that de la Espriella respect Colombian judicial sovereignty and halt any effort to extradite President Gustavo Petro, warning he would call for peaceful civil disobedience if those conditions go unmet.