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Drop Site daily

Trump's "insane" Iran war plan; Ukraine strikes Russian refinery in defiance of Trump; Dockworkers stage global antiwar strike

Drop Site Daily: October 30, 2026

Iran

· **Top U.S. commander briefs Trump on Iran attack plans:** Brad Cooper, the top U.S. commander in the Middle East, briefed President Donald Trump on military options against Iran at the White House on Thursday, alongside War Secretary Pete Hegseth and Joint Chiefs Chairman Dan Caine, according to the Wall Street Journal.

  · U.S. officials have warned Gulf states to prepare for a short, intense military campaign after the November midterm elections, while the Pentagon has moved additional air defenses, munitions, and supplies into the region, and relocated troops from vulnerable bases.

  · The U.S. Army is deploying another Patriot missile battery to Israel amid concerns over interceptor shortages.

· **Senator Murphy calls Trump's Iran war plan "insane":** Democratic Sen. Chris Murphy, a member of the Senate Foreign Relations and Appropriations committees, said the Trump administration's plan to restart the war on Iran was "insane."

  · Murphy posted a video of his remarks on X with the comment: "Some of us have been briefed on the war plan. And while I cannot disclose any details, I can say this: the plan is insane. It will not achieve objectives and will set off a new cycle of escalation."

- At an event this week organized by the Middle East Institute, Murphy said that the plan would "lead to devastating escalation and the likely destruction of our commitment to the rule of law."

· **Qatari mediators return to Tehran for U.S.-Iran negotiations:** Qatari mediators returned to Tehran for talks aimed at reaching a U.S.-Iran agreement, Reuters reported Friday. Qatar presented a U.S-approved draft plan to Iran on Sunday, but a senior Iranian official rejected the proposals as unacceptable.

- Iranian Parliament Speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf wrote on X that Tehran's conditions had been "repeatedly and clearly stated to the mediators," adding that "the carrot-and-stick approach has no effect on Iran," and that progress was possible only once Iran's proposals were accepted.
- Washington reportedly wants nuclear issues addressed from the outset of negotiations, while Tehran is demanding that the U.S. first end its blockade of Iranian ports and lift sanctions on oil exports.

· **NYT: U.S. oil companies take $130+ billion in recent profits during Iran war, Americans pay $147 billion for fuel:** More than 50 major U.S. oil and gas companies earned over $130 billion in profits between April and September during the U.S.-Israeli war on Iran, according to a New York Times analysis. Over the same period last year, the companies took less than $47 billion in profits.

- Comparing the same periods this year and last year, Exxon Mobil's third-quarter profits in 2026 more than doubled to $15.41 billion, while Chevron's nearly tripled to $9.92 billion, as soaring oil prices and disruptions to Middle Eastern refining capacity boosted earnings.
- Meanwhile, Americans have paid $147 billion for gasoline and diesel since the war began on February 28, equivalent to more than $1,100 per household, according to Brown University's Climate Solutions Lab.
- Despite the windfall, many companies are paying down debt and accumulating cash rather than expanding production or refining capacity. One oil executive, Valero Energy's chief financial officer, said that much of the surplus would ultimately go to shareholders.

· **Vance insists Trump will not let Iran conflict become a "forever war":** U.S. Vice President JD Vance defended the Trump administration's military campaign against Iran

during a Fox News town hall in Fort Worth, Texas, after a Republican voter questioned whether the administration had fulfilled its promise to end costly foreign wars.

- "I understand the frustration about foreign misadventures in the Middle East," Vance said. "We've been involved in Iran in some form for seven months. The United States has been dealing with Iran for 47 years, and I promise you that Donald Trump is not going to let Iran become a forever war."

· **U.S. demands Iran cooperate with IAEA despite military attacks that halted inspections:** U.S. Ambassador to the UN Mike Waltz accused Iran of failing to cooperate with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) at a UN Security Council meeting, telling Tehran's delegation, "Your lies are no good here," and insisting that the nuclear watchdog needed "answers, not speeches."

- During the meeting, IAEA Director General Rafael Grossi said that military attacks in June 2025 had forced the agency to suspend inspections and withdraw personnel from Iran for safety reasons.
- Grossi said that Tehran had previously agreed to allow inspectors into its Isfahan enrichment facility, however, "the commencement of the attacks prevented our inspector from going to the site."
- He added that the agency had identified no repairs or reconstruction at nuclear facilities damaged in the 2025 and 2026 attacks.

· **Small boat attaches explosives to tanker in Strait of Hormuz, sparking engine-room fire:** A tanker was attacked with explosive devices in the Strait of Hormuz on Friday, approximately 25 nautical miles northeast of Khasab, Oman, according to the United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations (UKMTO).

- A small boat approached the tanker and attached two explosive devices to its hull above the waterline, triggering explosions and an engine-room fire that temporarily disabled the vessel.
- UKMTO said that the crew extinguished the fire and resumed its journey, with no injuries or environmental damage reported.
- Separately, Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps Navy said it had stopped two oil tankers in the southern waters of the strait after they allegedly switched off their navigation systems and attempted to travel through unauthorized routes with U.S. military support. It remains unclear whether the incidents are connected.

Palestine

· **Israeli forces displace nearly 5,000 Palestinians in Hebron, settlers attack olive harvesters across occupied West Bank:**

- **Hebron:** Israeli forces continued their siege of the city for the eighth consecutive day on Friday, deploying military reinforcements, raiding homes, and forcibly displacing more families from Al-Jalda and Deir Baha. At least 4,969 Palestinians comprising 780 families have been displaced, including 336 infants, 441 elderly people, and 44 people with disabilities, Al Jazeera reported.
- **Nablus:** Israeli soldiers fired stun grenades and forced more than 30 olive harvesters off their land in Al-Lubban Al-Sharqiya. In Burqa, settlers beat and injured a 36-year-old Palestinian, while others raided and vandalized a home in Al-Masoudiya, destroying its contents and cutting its electricity.
- **Bethlehem:** Israeli forces assaulted Palestinian olive harvesters and foreign solidarity activists in Abu Njeim, southeast of Bethlehem, forcing them off their land at gunpoint and arresting three harvesters.
- **Ramallah:** Israeli settlers attacked olive harvesters and a solidarity activist in Kafr Malik and Al-Mughayyir, firing live ammunition toward Palestinian homes.
- **Jenin:** Israeli settlers raided Jaba, stealing equipment from an auto repair workshop, smashing the windows of three vehicles, slashing their tires, and stealing two sheep, according to the town's mayor.

· **Dockworkers at 110 ports across 22 countries strike against wars on Gaza and Iran:** Dockworkers at more than 110 ports across 22 countries on five continents are striking on Friday, under the slogan "Dockworkers do not work for war," demanding an end to Israel's genocide in Gaza and U.S.-Israeli military attacks on Iran and expressing solidarity with Cuba, Venezuela, and Sudan.

- More than 25 trade unions are participating, with 24-hour strikes called in Italy, France, Greece, Turkey, and India, alongside shorter walkouts elsewhere.
- The campaign group No Harbour for Genocide estimates that more than $2 billion worth of cargo could be left idle, with participating ports handling 13.5% of global shipping.

- The group said it tracked 315 shipments of components for Israeli arms manufacturer Elbit Systems through 56 commercial ports between August 2025 and September 2026, all of which are expected to participate in Friday's action.
- The Palestinian labor movement endorsed the strike, urging unions to intensify boycott and divestment efforts against Israel.

· **Netanyahu loses majority in Israeli election, rules out coalition with Arab-led parties:** Israel's Central Elections Committee published the final results of Tuesday's election early Friday. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's bloc lost its parliamentary majority, falling from 68 to 53 seats in the 120-member Knesset. The main opposition bloc secured 48 seats, while the Arab-led Joint List and Ra'am won a record 19 seats combined. Neither major bloc reached the 61 seats needed to form a government.

- Netanyahu ruled out cooperation with Arab-led parties, writing on X that "it is forbidden to form a government with them," while his Likud party accused them of "stealing" the election. The Central Elections Committee rejected claims of widespread voter fraud, calling the reports "entirely unfounded."
- The official results will be presented to President Isaac Herzog, ahead of consultations on forming a government, while the new Knesset is scheduled to be sworn in on November 10.

Yemen

· **Ansarallah claims six strikes on Saudi oil facilities and airports; denies accusation of attack over holy city:** Yemen's Ansarallah claimed six attacks on Saudi Arabia on Thursday, targeting major oil facilities, airports, and military positions.

- Ballistic missiles struck the Ras Tanura refinery, Saudi Aramco's Abqaiq facility, King Khalid International Airport in Riyadh, and the Rabigh oil refinery, while a drone attack on King Fahd International Airport in Dammam disrupted air traffic, military spokesperson Yahya Saree claimed. A sixth operation targeted Saudi military forces in Najran.
- Saudi-led forces said they intercepted and destroyed a drone over the Islamic holy city of Mecca on Friday, according to Saudi-coalition spokesperson Turki Al-Maliki, attributing the drone to Ansarallah. Ansarallah denied launching any operation against Saudi Arabia on Friday, calling the Mecca claim a fabrication.

- Separately, debris from two Ansarallah ballistic missiles intercepted above Riyadh caused minor injuries to one person and damaged a house and a vehicle, Saudi Civil Defense said.

· **Saudi strikes kill 27 in Yemen:** Saudi airstrikes on Yemen's Taiz province killed at least 13 people on Thursday, most of them women and children, according to the Health Ministry in Sana'a. Ansarallah's Al-Masirah TV reported that three homes were destroyed.

- The Ministry said that another strike in Al-Jawf hit a crowded market and a nearby gas station in Al-Hazm, the province's capital, killing 14 people, including three children and two women, and wounding 15.
- Saudi aircraft also struck the central prison of the Western Coast Security Sector in Mocha district, on Taiz's Red Sea coast, wounding two inmates, one critically, according to Al-Masirah.

U.S. News

· **Binance halts withdrawals after hackers steal $6+ billion in crypto:** Binance, the world's largest crypto exchange, said on Thursday that it suspended deposits and withdrawals after hackers stole about $6.3 billion in crypto coins. The company said that it would cover customers' losses. The research group TRM Labs said that it has "high confidence" that North Korea's elite hacking unit was behind the theft. On Friday, Binance said it had begun recovering assets and that it expects to allow withdrawals within two days.

· **Axios: Fired Pentagon planner admits to leaking classified information on Iran, Ukraine to media, internal report says:** The War Department's top military planner, Lt. Gen. **Brett Sylvia**, admitted to leaking classified information about the wars in Ukraine and Iran to two reporters over the last year, according to an internal report obtained by Axios. War Secretary **Pete Hegseth** fired Sylvia earlier this week. According to a U.S. official, the firing came after Sylvia failed four polygraph tests and acknowledged leaking classified information on video. According to the internal report, Sylvia began leaking classified information to the media as early as June 2025.

· **Reuters: Pentagon suspects cyberattacks targeted refrigerators at military bases:** The War Department is investigating freezer malfunctions at U.S. military bases as cyberattacks, Reuters reported. In one case, the suspected attack caused food spoilage. Cyberattacks on more than 350 grocery stores in France earlier this month caused massive spoilage. U.S. Army investigators said they are collaborating with French authorities to discover more about "the refrigeration outages in Europe."

· **Judge rejects Trump administration's Medicaid requirement for "medically frail" people:** Federal Judge **Richard Stearns** of Boston ruled on Thursday that the Trump administration's Medicaid guidance requiring chronically ill people to prove they can't work is "contrary to law." He said, "enforcement of an unlawful definition of 'medically frail' may lead to the disenrollment of otherwise eligible vulnerable individuals relying on Medicaid coverage for continuity of care." The ruling left intact many of the new Medicaid requirements—recipients must work, volunteer, or attend schooling for 80 hours a week to keep their benefits. These requirements take effect in January 2027.

· **New Mexico megachurch endorses Republican candidates, testing federal ban on church electioneering:** Legacy Church, a nondenominational church with nine locations in New Mexico, endorsed **Greg Cunningham**, who is challenging Democratic Rep. **Gabriel Vasquez** in a district that Trump won in 2024, and gubernatorial candidate **Gregg Hull**. The endorsements may violate the Johnson Amendment, which bars tax-exempt nonprofits, including churches, from endorsing candidates. The church pastor **Steve Smothermon** told The Guardian that laws curtailing political speech are "null and void." The Trump administration is challenging the ban on church electioneering.

· **DOJ issues new grand jury subpoenas in Alaska "spoiler candidate" probe:** The Justice Department issued new grand jury subpoenas in its investigation of a "spoiler candidate" campaign in Alaska, the Associated Press reported. The subpoenas follow a Wednesday report from the New York Times that Democrat **Mary Peltola**'s campaign wanted to spoil Republican Sen. **Dan Sullivan**'s reelection campaign by adding similarly named candidates to the ballot. Peltola's team allegedly recruited a retired teacher named **Daniel J. Sullivan Jr.** in the effort. President Trump said that Peltola "should be removed from the ballot and prosecuted." Alaska Gov. **Mike Dunleavy** ordered a state investigation into the matter. Peltola denied any knowledge about the alleged effort, calling it "just another distraction," and Sullivan Jr. has denied any contact with her campaign.

    · The Times' main source for its story is Peltola's former campaign manager, **Elisa Rios**. Shortly before the publication of the story, Rios "retracted all statements made regarding the 2026 Alaska Senate Race," she told a reporter. "I am not willing to be a source for any story in any capacity."

· **WIRED: Defense contractor connected personal AI agent to Pentagon network, exposing government data to third party:** An Accenture employee working for the War Department connected their personal Claude AI agent to a government network used by intelligence agencies, WIRED reported on Thursday. The contractor linked their AI coding agent to a Pentagon network for unclassified information so that the agent could write and

deploy code. The agent ran for two months with administrative access and appears to have sent login credentials and a map of the network to a third-party website that the National Institute of Standards and Technology has flagged as high risk.

· **DOJ says FBI and ICE personnel won't serve as midterm poll monitors, but other federal agents will:** The DOJ said in a court filing on Wednesday that ICE and FBI employees will not monitor the midterm elections next week. Instead, agents of the Bureau of Prisons, the ATF, and the DEA will. The disclosure follows a suit from the NAACP that sought to bar prosecutors and law enforcement from monitoring polling places. The DOJ said that agents of the Bureau of Prisons, the ATF, and the DEA will stand outside the polls to observe the scene, take notes, and interview willing voters. The federal agents will not act as law enforcement officials, the DOJ added, and will not carry firearms. DHS Secretary **Markwayne Mullin** said in September that ICE would not patrol or monitor polling sites but could be present "if there is a threat to that polling place or we're serving a warrant on someone that we have been actively tracking down."

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

Other International News

· **RSF accused of attacks on civilian infrastructure:** About 13 drone attacks hit several civilian areas across the Wad Al-Mahi governorate of Sudan's Blue Nile State on Thursday. The attacks, which local officials blamed on the Rapid Support Forces, hit a local market, a school, a health center, and several mines. The Sudanese government has accused neighboring Ethiopia of facilitating RSF attacks from its territory.

· **Ukraine strikes Russian refinery, violating promise to Trump:** Russia's Novokuibyshevsk oil refinery was on fire Friday after a Ukrainian drone attack, just hours after the Wall Street Journal reported that Kyiv had paused refinery strikes under pressure from the Trump administration. The Rosneft plant in the Samara region, which makes jet fuel for Russia's Aerospace Forces, can process 8.8 million tons of crude a year, equal to about 3% of all the oil Russia refined in 2024. It was last hit in August. The Journal reported that Ukrainian long-range units were told in mid-October to put refinery strikes on hold after Trump advisers asked Kyiv for a 30-day halt, citing people familiar with Ukrainian military operations.

· **Finnish police launch criminal probe into Google data center:** Finnish police are investigating whether Google's local subsidiary Tuike Finland violated the Water Act and caused environmental damage at a construction site for a data center near Muhos, in northern

Finland. A guilty finding could bring a substantial fine on the corporation. Google said that it will cooperate with the investigation. The construction site is part of Google's $15 billion investment in AI infrastructure in Finland. Electricity use across the country could rise up to 40% as a result of Google's data centers, according to an estimate by the national grid operator.

· **Christine Lagarde to step down as European Central Bank president:** Christine Lagarde announced on Thursday that she will leave the presidency of the European Central Bank on February 7, well before her term ends in October 2027. She said that she wants "the freedom of speech, the freedom of expression, and the freedom to engage on matters that are not monetary policy matters." She will preside over only two further policy meetings. European Council President António Costa said the succession process for the position will begin immediately. Lagarde assumed the top spot at ECB in 2019. She is the bank's first female president, and its first leader not trained as an economist.

· **Albanian opposition storms parliament, disrupts session with smoke bombs and flares:** Sali Berisha, leader of Albania's opposition, stormed into a parliamentary session in Tirana on Thursday with other opposition members to demand Prime Minister Edi Rama's resignation. The protesters deployed smoke bombs and flares inside the parliament. Berisha said that lawmakers "deserve tear gas, rubber bullets, cracked skulls, and broken bones, not the young people," referencing student protesters who have faced government repression. Prime Minister Rama has remained in high office for 13 years. He has refused to resign.

· **Suspect in France shooting that killed one admits targeting people who "appeared to be Muslim, African, or North African":** French authorities charged a suspect with murder and attempted murder in connection with a "terrorist" enterprise, following a shooting in the suburbs of Paris last week that killed one person and injured seven others. Most of the victims were foreign nationals. The suspect, who authorities identified as Kevin T, said that he targeted people "who appeared to be Muslim, African, or North African." In a search of his home, police said that they found "weapons or weapon components, specifically a magazine, two pairs of brass knuckles, a steel bayonet, and a silencer." They also found a copy of the book "Mein Kampf."

· **Icon of Mexican left Cuauhtemoc Cardenas dies at 92:** Cuauhtemoc Cardenas, an icon of the Mexican left and the first elected mayor of Mexico City, died at 92, the Mexican government announced Wednesday. Cardenas, the son of President Lazaro Cardenas, broke with Mexico's ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party in 1987 and lost the 1988 presidential election, which many analysts believe was rigged. He helped found the Party of the Democratic Revolution, and finished in third place in the presidential elections of 1994 and

2000. He became Mexico City's mayor in 1997. Upon his passing, President Claudia Sheinbaum called his role in Mexico's contemporary history "fundamental."

· **Trump calls Brazil's election a "great embarrassment," declines to say if he accepts the result:** Asked Thursday about Brazil's presidential elections, Trump said, "I thought the election was a great embarrassment to the people of Brazil." He "didn't take sides," he added, but "take a look at the market, I mean their market went down through the floor." In the event, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva beat Flávio Bolsonaro by more than four million votes. The New York Times reported that the Trump administration helped Bolsonaro and his family flee Brazil after he was defeated, crossing by land into Argentina under visas from Javier Milei's government, then flying by private plane to Ecuador and then Miami on Wednesday. Officials told the Times that the U.S. will likely grant the family permanent residency.

· **Former El Salvador President Tony Saca released following corruption prison sentence:** Elias Antonio "Tony" Saca, who led El Salvador from 2004 to 2009, was released from prison on Thursday. Saca, a member of the conservative Nationalist Republican Alliance, was convicted in 2018 of diverting and laundering more than $300 million from the state budget, for which he served ten years in prison. (The sentence was backdated to his 2016 arrest.) He is one of four Salvadoran presidents who have faced corruption charges. Prosecutors said he diverted funds for personal use and to benefit allies. A civil court separately ordered him to repay the state for the millions he stole.