

Mamdani-backed Israel critics sweep NYC; Texas anti-ICE protesters get 30-100 years; Peru's Sánchez rejects runoff results

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U.S. News

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· Primary results:

- Candidates endorsed by New York City Mayor **Zohran Mamdani** swept Tuesday's New York Democratic primaries, unseating two incumbent members of Congress in a major victory for the new mayor's political program. All three winning candidates ran campaigns criticizing AIPAC.
- In New York's 10th district, former city comptroller and Mamdani ally **Brad Lander** defeated the incumbent, AIPAC-backed **Dan Goldman**, in a landslide, winning 65 percent of the vote.
- In the contentious race to represent the state's 13th district, progressive challenger **Darializa Avila Chevalier** prevailed over incumbent **Adriano Espaillat**, edging out a five-point victory over the five-term congressman. Espaillat had received a last-minute surge of funding from pro-Israel groups, Drop Site [reported](#) last week, and his supporters had resorted to racist attacks on Chevalier during the final stretch of the campaign, but it was not enough to beat the DSA- and Mamdani-backed activist.
- In the race to represent the state's 7th district, which covers large parts of Brooklyn and Queens, State Rep. **Claire Valdez**, whom Mamdani endorsed to replace outgoing Rep. **Nydia Velasquez**, handily defeated Brooklyn Borough President **Antonio Reynoso**, Velasquez's preferred successor.
- In an encounter on Tuesday, Drop Site's **Ryan Grim** [told](#) Rep. **Adriano Espaillat** there would have been no primary challenge if he had simply "called out the genocide and told AIPAC to F off." Espaillat did not respond beyond a shrug.

- State Assemblyman **Micah Lasher** [won](#) the crowded primary to replace Rep. **Jerry Nadler** in New York’s 12th district, which covers much of Upper Manhattan, defeating fellow assemblyman **Alex Bores** (who ran as an AI critic) and influencer and Kennedy scion **Jack Schlossberg**. The race drew in more than \$39 million in spending, mostly from artificial intelligence companies. Lasher, a former aide to former mayor **Michael Bloomberg**, received \$10 million from his former boss. Mamdani, who is a resident of the district, declined to endorse a candidate in the race.
- Democratic Socialist **Aber Kawas** won the primary to represent the 12th district in New York’s State Senate. She will be the first Palestinian to be elected to the New York State Legislature. Kawas worked alongside Mamdani on the “Not on Our Dime” campaign, which would prohibit organizations that promote West Bank settlement from receiving the benefits attendant to their status as “charities.”
- **Adrian Boafo**, the Israel lobby-backed Oracle lobbyist, won his primary in Maryland’s 5th district, defeating **Quincy Bareebe**, who had consolidated support in the final stretch as Boafo’s strongest opponent. Boafo is likely to succeed longtime Rep. **Steny Hoyer**, his former boss. He received \$12 million from pro-crypto and pro-Israel groups during his primary campaign. Despite the massive funding, he won just over 21,000 votes, a mere 32 percent of the total, but with 23 other candidates running, it was enough to win. (Drop Site’s report on Boafo is available [here](#)).
- Former Democratic Rep. **Ben McAdams**, with under-the-radar [support](#) from the pro-Israel lobby, won his [Utah primary](#) against two challengers, **Nate Blouin** and **Liban Mohamed**. McAdams will head back to Congress, as the seat is safe for Democrats.
- **Senate passes War Powers Resolution on Iran:** The U.S. Senate [voted](#) 50-48 to approve Representative **Gregory Meeks**’s War Powers Resolution directing President Donald Trump to end U.S. hostilities against Iran, with four Republicans—**Rand Paul** (Ky.), **Susan Collins** (Me.), **Lisa Murkowski** (Ala.), and **Bill Cassidy** (La.)—joining Democrats in support of the measure. Two Republicans, **Mitch McConnell** (Ky.) and Sen. **Dave McCormick** (Pa.) missed the vote. As with previous such resolutions, **John Fetterman** (Pa.) was the sole Democrat to vote against the bill.
 - The vote marks the first time since the original 1973 War Powers Resolution that both chambers of Congress have passed such a measure, and the concurrent resolution does not require Trump’s signature. War powers are clearly delineated to be in the jurisdiction of the congressional branch, meaning the resolution is binding, per [the argument](#) made by Bruce Ackerman in the American Prospect.

- Before its passage, Maryland Sen. **Chris Van Hollen** had [argued](#) for the bill on the Senate floor, warning the ceasefire remains “tenuous” despite the recently signed U.S.-Iran memorandum. Van Hollen also denounced “military adventurism” and “fantasies of regime change” in his Senate floor speech.
- President Donald Trump attacked the Senate in a Truth Social post on Tuesday night after it adopted a resolution directing him to pull U.S. forces from hostilities with Iran, calling the vote “poorly timed and meaningless.” Trump claimed in the post that he had Iran “on the ‘ropes, willing to give us practically anything,” and that the resolution had “provided aid and comfort to the Enemy“.
- The vote comes as the Pentagon is seeking an additional \$80 billion from Congress mostly for the Iran war as it replenishes munitions and stockpiles.
- **Texas ICE protesters get 30- to 100-year sentences:** Nine activists [convicted](#) in March on terrorism-related charges stemming from a July 4 protest at an immigrant detention facility in Alvarado, Texas, received sentences ranging from 30 to 100 years on Tuesday.
 - Former U.S. Marine Corps reservist **Benjamin Song**, who shot and wounded a police officer was sentenced to 100 years, while five others received 50 years. **Maricela Rueda** received 70 years, and **Daniel Sanchez-Estrada**, who was not present at the protest, was charged with concealing antifascist magazines at the request of his wife and received 30 years. Prosecutors charged the group with participating in a conspiracy—though many of the protesters did not know each other—and were characterized as part of “antifa,” a loosely affiliated movement the Trump administration has attempted to criminalize as a terrorist organization. “Antifa terrorists who attack law enforcement and federal facilities will face swift and uncompromising justice,” Acting Attorney General **Todd Blanche** said in a [statement](#).
 - Former federal prosecutor **Barbara McQuade** said she had expected sentences closer to 15 to 25 years, calling the stacking of consecutive sentences unusual. The punishments exceed the longest sentences given for the January 6 attack on the U.S. Capitol.
- **Supreme Court sides with Trump administration in green card immigration parole case:** The Supreme Court [expanded](#) the government’s power to remove green card holders accused of crimes in a Tuesday ruling. In a 6-3 split, the court found immigration officers had the authority to put lawful permanent resident **Muk Choi Lau** on immigration parole in 2012 after he was accused of a counterfeiting crime upon returning from a trip to China, without needing to first prove the crime by clear and convincing evidence.

- Justice **Clarence Thomas** wrote the majority opinion, while Justice **Ketanji Brown Jackson**, in a dissent joined by the court's two other liberal justices, warned the ruling effectively placed Lau in "immigration limbo" before any conviction and gave the government "a massive blank check."
- The court is expected to decide on several other immigration disputes this term, including birthright citizenship and asylum policy.
- **Supreme Court clears way for Exxon to sue Cuba over 1960 nationalization, 6-3:** The U.S. Supreme Court **ruled** Tuesday that Exxon Mobil can sue Cuban state-owned companies in American courts for more than \$1 billion over assets Cuba nationalized after its 1959 revolution.
 - In the 6-3 decision written by Justice **Brett Kavanaugh**, the court held that the 1996 Helms-Burton Act strips Cuban state enterprises of the sovereign immunity that normally shields foreign governments, while the three liberal justices dissented, with Justice **Elena Kagan** writing that the law contains no such provision.
 - The ruling, combined with last month's Havana Docks Corp. v. Royal Caribbean Cruises decision, opens the door for those with existing claims, nearly 6,000 of which have been certified and which are collectively worth almost \$2 billion, to pursue legal action against the Cuban government.
- **Trump orders DOJ probe into oil companies over gas prices, accuses them of "gouging" consumers:** President Donald Trump **said** Wednesday he had instructed the Justice Department to immediately investigate oil companies for not lowering gas prices in line with falling crude costs, accusing them of "gouging" consumers in a late-night Truth Social post that named no specific companies. Gas prices fell below \$4 per gallon last week for the first time since March, well above the \$3.22 average a year ago, as oil prices eased amid an interim U.S.-Iran deal to reopen the Strait of Hormuz.
- **Drop Site's Julian Andreone asks Senators about Lebanon:** Drop Site's Julian Andreone asked senators on Capitol Hill on Tuesday whether Israel is deliberately prolonging the war by continuing to attack Lebanon. Republican senators defended Israel's ongoing violations of the memorandum of understanding agreed upon last week, while Sen. **Elizabeth Warren** argued there must be "constraints" on how Israel is using American weapons. **His latest dispatch from Capitol Hill is available [here](#).**

Iran and Ceasefire

- **Pakistan's Sharif says Iran's ballistic missile program "was never on the agenda":**

While hosting Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian on Tuesday, Pakistan's Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif [said](#) the memorandum of understanding "does not mention" ballistic missiles and that the topic "was never on the agenda." Sharif previously told Pakistan's parliament that the 60-day talks would address the missile program and resolve the issue "in a manner that ensures lasting global peace."

- Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian [stressed](#) the former position in remarks on Tuesday in Islamabad, saying that if Iran did not have its defensive missiles during its recent conflict with Israel and the U.S., the pair "would have plowed through Iran just like Gaza and would not have spared the old and young."

- **Oman announces temporary Hormuz corridor:** Oman [announced](#) Tuesday the opening of a temporary maritime corridor through the Strait of Hormuz in coordination with the International Maritime Organization (IMO), according to the Oman News Agency. The Sultanate said it had "worked in coordination with the IMO to provide the option of using a temporary sea lane for all ships," adding that the move reflects its responsibility toward the strategic waterway, as well as its commitment to international maritime law and freedom of navigation "without imposing transit fees." The statement also said the decision aligns with "the results of efforts and initiatives reached by the United States and Iran."

- **Iran and Oman signal future Strait of Hormuz service fees:** Iran and Oman [said](#) in a joint statement on Wednesday that they will negotiate the Strait of Hormuz's future administration through a joint working group, including "the services that will be provided in this regard and the costs associated with them in accordance with international standards."

- The two countries reaffirmed their commitment to the safe passage of shipping through the strait while emphasizing their sovereignty and sovereign rights as coastal states, and agreed to consult with other littoral states on the waterway's future administration under the Islamabad memorandum of understanding.

- President Donald Trump said, in a [post](#) on Truth Social on Wednesday, that Iran has told the U.S. that it is not seeking any fees on shipping through the Strait of Hormuz, writing that "NO TOLLS, NO INSURANCE COSTS, & NO OTHER CHARGES OF ANY KIND BEING SOUGHT OR RECEIVED BY IRAN ON SHIPS TRAVELING THE STRAIT OF HORMUZ." He warned that "If this is false information negotiations would end immediately." Iran has repeatedly said it plans to charge [what it calls maritime service fees](#) for crossing the Strait, as opposed to [tolls](#).

- **Trump disputes Iranian denial of scheduled IAEA inspection:** Asked on Tuesday about Iranian officials [saying](#) no IAEA inspector visit is scheduled, Trump said they were wrong and claimed Iran told the U.S. privately that an inspection is set, saying “we have it down 100%.”

- **Hamas leadership speaks with Iran:** Senior Hamas official Basem Naim [spoke](#) on Tuesday with Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi, according to a statement released by the movement. Naim said that Araghchi affirmed in their call that Iran “consistently raises the issue of the ongoing Zionist aggression on Gaza, the occupation’s persistent violations, and the continuing genocide (despite the ceasefire agreement) in all international forums,” and has continued to do so in its present negotiations with the U.S.

- **Qatar says LNG output could return to normal “within a few weeks”:** Qatar is [preparing](#) to restore normal liquefied natural gas production following an interim U.S.-Iran deal, Prime Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani told the Financial Times on Tuesday.

- The world’s second-largest LNG producer halted output in March after an alleged Iranian drone and missile attack on its Ras Laffan complex, which CEO Saad al-Kaabi said wiped out about 17 percent of export capacity.

- The news follows a separate explosion at Ras Laffan on Sunday that killed at least 13 workers during a restart, which Qatar attributed to a technical malfunction.

- State-owned QatarEnergy will lift the force majeure only once “it’s safe to operate,” the PM said, citing disruptions to shipping in the Strait of Hormuz.

- **WSJ confirms Iran enlisted psychologists to analyze Trump’s mindset during negotiations:** The Wall Street Journal confirmed Tuesday earlier reporting by Drop Site’s Jeremy Scahill that Iran enlisted psychologists to help analyze President Donald Trump’s mindset during negotiations.

- The Journal reported that Iranian negotiators told mediators they consulted a team of psychologists to help understand the president’s mindset, with diplomats working with the specialists to try to predict Trump’s public response to Iran’s proposals, according to mediators. **Jeremy’s original report for Drop Site is available [here](#).**

Lebanon

- **Israeli drone strike kills two in southern Lebanon:** Two people were [killed](#) on Wednesday after an Israeli drone struck a vehicle on the Tallet Al-Dabsha road toward the

Duhat Kfar Reman area in southern Lebanon, according to Lebanon's National News Agency (NNA).

- An Israeli drone dropped two stun grenades over the town of Bar'asheet in the Bint Jbeil district, injuring a child according to L'Orient Today. Israeli forces also **opened fire** on a vehicle in the Al-Dair neighborhood of Nabatieh Al-Fawqa and on another vehicle near the vicinity of a military barracks area, with no injuries reported.
- L'Orient Today reported that southern Lebanon remained largely calm overnight on Tuesday. Eyewitnesses reported Israeli soldiers present near Nabatieh Fawqa, and Israeli military vehicles moving through Khiam toward nearby high ground.
- **Katz: No withdrawal “even if there is an American demand”:** Israeli Defense Minister Israel Katz **said** the Israeli army will not withdraw from its “security zone” in southern Lebanon, “even if there is an American demand,” according to the Times of Israel. Speaking at a conference in Tel Aviv on Wednesday, Katz also said: “200,000 [Lebanese] residents will not return [to the homes they evacuated],” claiming that previous security zones with civilian presence led to attacks on Israeli forces.
- This comes as the fifth round of talks between Israel and Lebanon in Washington is **reported** by Reuters to include discussions on a proposal that would see Israeli forces withdraw from some territory they seized in southern Lebanon, handing it over to the Lebanese military. According to Israeli officials, the Lebanese troops involved would undergo U.S. vetting to ensure they are not linked to Hezbollah, while Israel would retain a military presence in a buffer zone along the border. In response, a senior Lebanese security official confirmed that Wednesday discussions would include specific military-to-military talks, including on the proposed pilot zones, noting that any concrete plan would only emerge after the final day of discussions on Thursday.
- Israel's U.S. ambassador, Yechiel Leiter, **denounced** the current round of U.S.-mediated talks with Lebanon as headed toward a “train wreck,” on Tuesday, accusing Washington of folding Lebanon into its deal with Iran in a way that “shields” Hezbollah. Leiter said negotiations had drifted from Israel's preferred goal of dismantling Hezbollah, which he said now “feels stronger and bolder,” and argued that the new U.S.-Iran deconfliction mechanism should not overshadow its demand that Hezbollah “must be defeated.”

Palestine

- **Killed and wounded:** Over the last 24 hours, two Palestinians were killed and 14 were injured in Israeli attacks across Gaza. The total recorded death toll since October 7, 2023 has risen to 73,041 killed, with 173,402 injured, according to the Palestinian Ministry of Health.

- Since October 11, the first full day of the so-called ceasefire, Israel has killed at least 1,029 Palestinians in Gaza and wounded 3,294, while 785 bodies have been recovered from under the rubble.

- **Child killed in displacement camp strike amid continued Israeli violations:** A Palestinian child was killed and several others were injured on Wednesday after an Israeli [drone strike](#) on the Al-Taybah camp, west of Khan Younis in southern Gaza, according to WAFA.

- The attack came amid continued Israeli violations of the ceasefire across the Gaza Strip, including artillery shelling, gunfire, and the demolition of homes and infrastructure. In Gaza City, artillery shelling targeted eastern neighborhoods and naval vessels opened fire toward the coastline. In northwestern Gaza, Israeli military vehicles carried out an incursion into the Al-Atatra area, accompanied by gunfire and bulldozing operations.

- **Israeli attacks kill two on Tuesday:** Israeli forces [carried out](#) at least four attacks in and around Khan Younis within about 90 minutes on Tuesday. The reported attacks killed at least two Palestinians and wounded at least three others, including a teenage boy who was shot.

- A child [suffered](#) critical injuries after an Israeli strike targeted the Al-Mawasi area west of Khan Younis in southern Gaza on Tuesday. The child was wounded by shrapnel from a missile that struck an electric bicycle, injuring three civilians in all.

- **Israel's National Security Council revives Gaza "voluntary migration" plans:** Israel's National Security Council [convened](#) a meeting Tuesday to revive plans promoting the "voluntary migration" of Palestinians from Gaza, Haaretz reported, with representatives from the Mossad, Shin Bet, military, and Defense Ministry in attendance.

- Mossad officials reiterated that no countries had agreed to accept Palestinians from Gaza. A security source told Haaretz that no change had occurred that would make such a move possible "without complex coordination between international actors."

- **Israeli settlers attack Palestinian homes south of Hebron, wound four:** Armed Israeli settlers [attacked](#) Palestinian homes and land in the town of Yatta, south of Hebron in the

occupied West Bank, on Wednesday, wounding four people and uprooting dozens of trees, Palestine Online reported.

- The settlers stormed the Wadi Al-Rakhim and Khallet Al-Hummus areas, pepper-spraying residents and leaving four with cuts, bruises, and cases of choking before they were taken to Yatta's government hospital, anti-settlement activist Osama Makhamra said.
- The settlers also uprooted 40 olive trees and 20 forest trees and blocked the road linking the two areas, obstructing residents' movement.
- **Elderly Palestinian man found with signs of torture:** An elderly Palestinian man was [found](#) on Tuesday near Gaza's "yellow line," unable to recall his own name after being released by Israeli forces, hospital staff reported to Falasteen Online. The man arrived with his hands and feet reportedly still bound, and doctors said his body showed clear signs of torture. Staff are now working to identify him and locate his family.
- **After 18 months and 98 hearings, Netanyahu concludes testimony in corruption trial:** Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu [concluded](#) his testimony on Wednesday in his long-running corruption trial, bringing to a close nearly a year and a half of appearances across 98 court hearings, the Times of Israel reported. Netanyahu first began testifying on December 10, 2024, though proceedings were repeatedly delayed due to health issues, diplomatic trips, and requests to postpone hearings amid political and military developments. He faces charges in three separate cases, including fraud and breach of trust, as well as one bribery charge related to receiving favorable media coverage. Israeli prosecutors are reportedly preparing to call around 100 witnesses during the next phase of proceedings, after which testimony from other defendants in the cases against Netanyahu will be heard.

Other International News

- **Peru's Sánchez refuses to recognize runoff results, alleges vote manipulation:** Leftist candidate Roberto Sánchez said he will not recognize the results of Peru's June 7 presidential runoff, alleging a "serious disruption to the electoral process," particularly as it related to overseas voting in the election. "We will not recognize the government of Mrs. Fujimori," he said on Tuesday.
 - With 99.72% of ballots processed, right-wing candidate Keiko Fujimori holds a lead of 50.11% to 49.89%, a margin of about 40,000 votes, and Sánchez is demanding the National Electoral Jury annul roughly 300,000 votes cast by Peruvians abroad,

arguing irregular handling by consular offices in the United States and Argentina favored Fujimori.

- The electoral body has rejected multiple legal challenges from Sánchez's party, Together for Peru, and the winner is scheduled to take office July 28 for a five-year term.

- **Polish activist investigating Ecuador's Noboa family murdered, postmortem finds:**

Polish anti-corruption activist Monika Silva Koniuszek was **murdered** after investigating allegations involving Ecuadorian President Daniel Noboa's family business, including claims that cocaine had been seized in banana shipments exported by Noboa Trading, the Guardian reported on Tuesday.

- Ecuador's government initially said her death appeared to be a suicide, but a postmortem found she died from a blow to the head and strangulation.

- Silva Koniuszek, who also investigated alleged land trafficking and environmental crimes, had received repeated death threats and told friends she recently delivered a dossier of allegations to the U.S. Embassy in Quito.

- **U.S. official says he urged RSF to halt actions endangering civilians in El Obeid:** U.S.

Senior Advisor for Arab and African Affairs Massad Boulos wrote on X on Tuesday that he had recently spoken with Rapid Support Forces leaders and "strongly urged them to halt any actions that could endanger civilians in and around El Obeid."

- Boulos said the United States is "deeply concerned" by reports of RSF and allied force mobilization, reiterating that the mobilization raises the risk of attacks on civilians and potential mass atrocities in the North Kordofan state capital.

- Separately on Tuesday, war crimes investigator Nathaniel Raymond, head of Yale's Humanitarian Research Lab, **told** the International Development Committee of Britain's House of Commons that Britain ignored more than two years of intelligence warning of a "genocidal" massacre in Sudan's El Fasher to protect its relationship with the United Arab Emirates.

- Raymond said his team gave UK officials real-time intelligence as the UAE-backed Rapid Support Forces besieged the city, which fell last October, and that officials prioritized ties with the UAE over preventing what he called the intentional starvation and genocidal slaughter of tens of thousands of civilians, with Yale estimating at least 60,000 people killed within weeks of the city's fall.

- He said Britain, as the UN Security Council “penholder” on Sudan, had sufficient intelligence to act, including by sanctioning UAE officials over weapons flows to the RSF, and that the failure spanned the tenures of Foreign Secretaries David Cameron, David Lammy, and Yvette Cooper.
- **Senior RSF political adviser defects:** Fares al-Nour, one of the [closest](#) political advisers to RSF commander Mohamed Hamdan “Hemedti” Dagalo, announced his defection on June 18, in what some have characterized as the highest-profile political departure from the paramilitary since the war began, Al Jazeera reported.
 - Nour oversaw the RSF’s most sensitive political and diplomatic files, led its delegation at the 2023 Jeddah peace talks, and later served as governor of Khartoum in the RSF-backed parallel government.
 - RSF sources told the Egyptian outlet Mada Masr that they believed Saudi Arabia helped facilitate his departure after he traveled there, an allegation Riyadh has not addressed.
- **Heat wave batters France after hottest day ever recorded:** France experienced another day of extreme heat after recording its hottest day ever, with temperatures reaching 44°C/111°F in parts of the country. Thousands of homes lost power due to the heat wave while French officials said at least 40 people drowned while trying to escape the heat by swimming, and two young children died after becoming trapped in a car.
- **Venezuela to disclose \$240 billion debt obligation:** Venezuela is preparing to reveal a national debt of about \$240 billion, the Financial Times reported, far above previous estimates, as interim leader Delcy Rodríguez seeks a large sovereign debt restructuring after taking power following Nicolás Maduro’s removal in a U.S. military operation. Caracas aims to strike a restructuring deal with international creditors by year-end and regain access to international markets after nearly a decade of exclusion. Venezuela’s economy has shrunk to about \$100 billion from \$370 billion in 2012, which has left its debt above 200 percent of GDP.
- **Germany prepares to scrap key part of naval modernization program:** Germany is preparing to cancel its high-profile F126 frigate program, a multibillion-euro plan to build six of the largest warships commissioned by the German Navy since World War II. Defense Minister Boris Pistorius and other officials have reportedly briefed industry and lawmakers on the move, citing cost overruns and delivery delays. The decision could trigger about €2 billion in write-offs while potentially signaling a drawdown of Berlin’s wider naval modernization drive planned through 2030.

· **Kenya halts US-funded Ebola facility construction after contempt of court ruling:**

Kenya's health minister [ordered](#) an immediate halt to construction of a U.S.-funded Ebola quarantine facility after being held in contempt of court for allowing work to continue despite a judicial order, Drop Site's Godfrey Olukeya reported on Wednesday.

· The planned 50-bed facility at Laikipia Air Base was intended to house U.S. personnel potentially exposed to Ebola while responding to outbreaks in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and neighboring countries, and the project has sparked lawsuits, protests, and opposition from local leaders and civil society groups.