

U.S. and Iran exchange strikes; Israel kills 32 in Lebanon; New York passes ICE restrictions

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Iran and Ceasefire

- **U.S. claims it hit two Iranian-flagged oil tankers:** U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) [claimed](#) on Friday it struck two “unladen” Iranian-flagged oil tankers it said were attempting to violate the U.S. blockade by entering an Iranian port on the Gulf of Oman.
- **CENTCOM claims it is blocking 70 tankers:** Earlier, CENTCOM claimed its forces were blocking 70 tankers from entering or leaving Iranian ports. “These commercial ships have the capacity to transport over 166 million barrels of Iranian oil worth an estimated \$13 billion-plus,” it said.
- **Trump calls exchange of fire a “love tap” and insists ceasefire holding:** President Donald Trump insisted the ceasefire with Iran is holding after U.S. forces exchanged drone, missile and gun fire with Iranian vessels in the Persian Gulf. CENTCOM said it was responding to what it called “unprovoked” attacks, while Iran said it had retaliated after U.S. Navy ships targeted an oil tanker in Iran’s territorial waters. Trump played down the exchange of fire, calling the U.S. strikes “just a love tap” in a phone call with ABC and insisted the ceasefire remained intact.
- **Iranian foreign minister accuses U.S. of “reckless military adventure”:** Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi on Friday accused the U.S. of engaging in a “reckless military adventure” and repeatedly undermining diplomatic efforts to end the war. “Every time a diplomatic solution is on the table, the U.S. opts for a reckless military adventure. Is it a crude pressure tactic? Or the result of a spoiler once again duping POTUS into another quagmire? Whatever the causes, the outcome is the same: Iranians never bow to pressure and diplomacy is always the victim,” Araghchi said in a social media post.
- **Additional clashes on Thursday:**
 - Iran’s Fars News Agency, which is affiliated with the country’s IRGC, [reported](#) on Thursday that parts of the Bahman Qeshm pier—a commercial and passenger port on the eastern side of Qeshm Island at the entrance to the Strait of Hormuz—were struck during what it described as exchanges of fire between Iranian forces and “the enemy,”

with state broadcaster IRIB also reporting sounds of explosions in the area. Further details were not immediately available. Qeshm is a crucial part of the shipping corridor approved by Iran.

- Trump **claimed** in a Truth Social post on Thursday that three U.S. destroyers successfully passed through the Strait of Hormuz under Iranian missile and drone fire, claiming no damage to American vessels and heavy losses for Iranian attackers. Iran's IRGC, however, disputed this claim, and said that the destroyers sustained "significant damage" and fled the strait at high speed.
- Iranian state media aired footage it says **shows** the Navy's missile and drone units targeting U.S. destroyers in response to what Tehran said were American attacks on two Iranian oil tankers near the Strait of Hormuz. CENTCOM confirmed U.S. warships transiting the strait came under Iranian missile, drone, and small boat attacks Thursday, but said Iran's response was "unprovoked."
- The United Arab Emirates' Ministry of Defense **said** on Friday its air defense systems intercepted two ballistic missiles and three drones launched from Iran, leaving three people moderately wounded
- U.S. Ambassador Mike Waltz, who has backed Israel's conduct in Gaza, which has included harsh restrictions on essential food, medicine, and shelter, **described** Iran's control of the strait as "collective punishment of the entire world."
- **Saudi Arabia and Kuwait lift restrictions on U.S. military:** Saudi Arabia and Kuwait have **lifted** restrictions on U.S. military use of their bases and airspace, paving the way for Washington to restart its Strait of Hormuz escort operation, dubbed "Operation Freedom," as early as this week, the Wall Street Journal reported Thursday. The restrictions had been imposed after senior U.S. officials downplayed Iranian attacks on Gulf states during the operation's initial 36-hour mission, drawing anger from Riyadh and Kuwait City, which were also concerned Washington would not protect them if fighting escalated further. The quick restoration of access came after a second phone call between President Donald Trump and Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, the Journal reported.
- **CIA assessment finds Iran can withstand blockade for months, contradicting Trump's claims:** A CIA analysis **delivered** to senior administration officials this week concluded that Iran can endure the U.S. naval blockade for at least three to four months—and potentially longer if Tehran successfully reroutes oil exports overland through Central Asia—before facing severe economic strain, the Washington Post reported Thursday, citing four people familiar with the document. The assessment also found Iran retains roughly 75% of its prewar mobile launchers and approximately 70% of its prewar missile stockpiles, directly

contradicting President Donald Trump's claim Wednesday that Iran's missiles are "mostly decimated" at around 18 to 19% of prewar levels. One U.S. official told the Post that Iran's actual resilience may exceed even the CIA's estimate, warning that the Islamic Republic's leadership has grown "more radical, determined and increasingly confident they can outlast U.S. political will." Iranian foreign minister Abbas Araghchi referred to the article in a social media post on Friday, saying, "The CIA is wrong, Araghchi wrote. "Our missile inventory and launcher capacity are not at 75% compared to Feb 28. The correct figure is 120%. As for our readiness to defend our people: 1,000%."

- **Trump administration quietly approved \$17 billion in Patriot missile sales to Gulf states:** The Trump administration has quietly [approved](#) \$17 billion in Patriot interceptor missile sales to Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, and Bahrain—worth \$9.3 billion, \$6.25 billion, and \$1.625 billion respectively—without public announcement, the New York Times reported Thursday, citing State Department and congressional officials. A separate \$4 billion Qatari order was also authorized last Friday, bringing total U.S. arms sales authorized that day to approximately \$25.7 billion, far exceeding the \$8 billion publicly announced. The sales come as stockpiles have been severely depleted: the U.S. and Gulf allies have together fired nearly 1,900 Patriot interceptors since the war began on February 28, and the Washington Post reported Wednesday that the U.S. military has burned through at least 43% of its prewar Patriot supply and at least 53% of its THAAD interceptors. American manufacturers currently produce just over 600 Patriot missiles per year, and while the administration has announced plans to raise output to 2,000 annually, most reporting indicates the buildup will take roughly seven years to achieve.

- **Russia warns of "unpredictable consequences" after U.S. and Bahrain introduce Security Council Resolution:** After the United States and Bahrain introduced a UN Security Council resolution threatening sanctions on Iran over its blockade of the Strait of Hormuz, Russia signaled it may [oppose](#) the measure, warning against "one-sided and confrontational" resolutions that could trigger escalation. It warned of "highly unpredictable consequences," and blamed the crisis on what it called unprovoked U.S. and Israeli aggression against Iran. The Russian delegation also voiced its support for Pakistani mediation efforts.

Lebanon

- **Israel targets ambulance crew:** The Israeli military launched a series of attacks on towns and villages in southern Lebanon on Friday killing at least five people, according to the state-run National News Agency (NNA). Among those killed was a paramedic in an Israeli attack on the town of Majdal Selm that directly targeted an ambulance crew, [according](#) to the NNA.

- **Thursday's attacks:**

- More than 100 people were killed or wounded across Lebanon on Thursday as Israeli forces intensified attacks nationwide, according to the Lebanese Health Ministry, which said 32 people were killed and 74 wounded in the past 24 hours. The National's Nada Maucourant later reported at least 18 more people killed Friday, including children and two paramedics. Lebanon's Health Ministry says the overall toll from Israel's escalation has now risen to 2,759 killed and 8,512 wounded.

- Israel continued its attacks on Lebanon on Thursday. In Harouf, an Israeli air raid hit a home, [killing](#) three people, including a 12-year-old girl, according to L'Orient Today. In Ad-Doueir, repeated strikes destroyed the town square, damaged homes and a mosque, and killed at least one person. Two people were [killed](#) by an Israeli strike on a pickup truck in the Nabatieh district, and another Israeli strike on Doueir's central square killed one and wounded several others.

- Israel [carried](#) out three separate direct attacks on first responders in various parts of Lebanon on Thursday, killing one medical worker and wounding 5 more, according to reports from journalists on the ground. An Israeli "double-tap" strike targeted a team from the Islamic Health Authority on the Harouf-Toul road in Nabatieh after they responded to an earlier attack, injuring four paramedics and badly damaging an ambulance.

- **Hezbollah claims eight strikes on Israeli positions in southern Lebanon:** Hezbollah [said](#) Thursday it carried out eight retaliatory attacks on Israeli positions in southern Lebanon, claiming strikes on two tanks, a bulldozer, an Iron Dome command center, and several troop gatherings across the Sour and Marjayoun districts between 2:00 and 5:00 p.m. The group said it deployed missile salvos, heavy artillery, and multiple suicide drones during the operation, including a strike it claimed destroyed a Merkava tank in Bint Jbeil with a direct hit and a separate drone strike it said knocked out an Iron Dome system near the Jall al Allam border position.

Gaza, the West Bank, and Israel

- **Two Palestinians describe sexual violence and torture in Israeli detention in testimony to Al Jazeera:** Two Palestinians [released](#) from Israeli detention gave harrowing accounts of sexual violence and torture inside Israeli facilities to Al Jazeera on Thursday. Mohammed El-Bakri, arrested during Israeli military operations in Gaza in 2024, said he was held blindfolded and handcuffed for months before soldiers stripped him naked, unleashed trained dogs on him, and sexually assaulted him with a penetrating object; after his release, he returned to Gaza to find his wife had been killed. A 17-year-old identified only as Ahmed—detained near a food distribution point in Rafah while trying to obtain food for his family—

described being stripped, restrained with metal, and sexually abused by Israeli female soldiers who filmed the assault and forced detainees to repeat degrading phrases, with his family requesting anonymity due to fear of social stigma. Al Jazeera's full report is available [here](#).

· **Palestinian rights group reports escalating abuse of detainees in Israeli prison**

isolation wing: The Asra Media Office, a Palestinian prisoner rights organization, [reported](#) Thursday that conditions for detainees in the isolation wing of Israel's Nafha and Ramon prisons are deteriorating sharply, with prisoners suffering from widespread and untreated scabies infections, denial of clothing and bathing access, and systematic physical abuse by prison suppression units. Raids involve strip searches, forcing detainees face-down on the ground for hours, physical assault, and stun grenades, after which prisoners are taken outside in handcuffs and left in harsh weather without adequate clothing—part of what the organization described as a deliberate campaign to break detainees physically and psychologically.

· **Mélenchon calls Gaza blockade piracy, vows French left will lead fight against**

genocide: Jean-Luc Mélenchon, leader of France's largest left-wing political bloc and a candidate for President, [issued](#) a sharp condemnation Thursday of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government, vowing that his movement would remain "at the forefront of those fighting against the genocide in Gaza and the massacres in Lebanon." Mélenchon also called the Israeli navy's interdiction of Gaza-bound flotillas "an act of piracy" and expressed solidarity with activists who took part in the voyages, while invoking the roughly 10,000 Palestinians he said are held in Israeli detention "enduring hell."

· **Gaza flotilla fleet to depart Greece Friday ahead of Marmaris assembly:** The Global Sumud Flotilla [said](#) Thursday its fleet will depart Greece on Friday for Turkey, where more than 30 additional boats are expected to join ahead of an international assembly in Marmaris on May 10–11 focused on expanding the movement's next phase and strengthening global Palestine solidarity efforts. Organizers plan a May 12 press conference to announce proposed accountability measures for Israel over the seizure of 181 activists and what they described as "piracy, kidnapping, and abuse" in international and European waters. The group also renewed its calls for the release of detained activists Saif Abukeshek and Thiago Ávila. Abukeshek's [condition](#) is reportedly deteriorating inside Israel's Shikma detention facility after escalating his hunger strike into a dry hunger strike. A newly disclosed report from Swedish consular officials following a prison visit says Saif was subjected to threats, psychological abuse, violent transfers, prolonged blindfolding, and interrogations where Israeli officers allegedly told him he would "spend [his] life rotting in jail" and never see his family again.

· **Flotilla detainees allege sexual violence and abuse by Israeli forces:** The Global Sumud Flotilla also [released](#) preliminary first-hand testimonies Thursday alleging a pattern of severe physical and sexual abuse against civilian participants following the Israeli military's interception of the flotilla in international waters last week, with at least four participants reporting sexual violence at the hands of Israeli soldiers, including anal penetration, forceful strikes to the genitals, and verbal sexual abuse. Testimonies also describe deliberate deprivation of clothing, food, water, and bedding, flooding of detention areas with water at night, and cases of both hypothermia and hyperthermia among detainees.

· **UAE transfers \$100 million to fund new Gaza police force:** The United Arab Emirates has [transferred](#) \$100 million to the U.S.-led Board of Peace to fund the training of a new Palestinian police force for Gaza, the Times of Israel reported Thursday. An Emirati security firm is contracted to build a force of 27,000 officers to be trained in Egypt and Jordan, with former Hamas civil servants eligible to apply, though they will be subject to vetting by Israel's Shin Bet. The transfer—the largest single amount the Board of Peace has received since \$17 billion was pledged at a donor conference in February, comes as Israel has continued to systematically target Palestinian civil police, including multiple lethal strikes on officers this week and around a dozen attacks on police stations or checkpoints since the start of 2026, according to Databases for Palestine.

· **Son of Hamas negotiator Khalil al-Hayya killed in Israeli airstrike on Gaza City:** Azzam al-Hayya, a son of Hamas lead negotiator Khalil al-Hayya, died Thursday at al-Shifa hospital in Gaza City from wounds sustained in an Israeli airstrike on the Al-Daraj neighborhood the previous evening. Azzam was the fourth of Khalil al-Hayya's sons killed by Israel—two others died in Israeli strikes in Gaza in 2008 and 2014, and a third was killed in an Israeli strike in Doha last September targeting Hamas leadership gathered for ceasefire talks. "He was at the mosque and on his way home, and they targeted him," Abu Sharif al-Hayya, Khalil al-Hayya's brother, told Drop Site News' Abdel Qader Sabbah. **Sabbah's latest dispatch from Gaza for Drop Site can be read in full [here](#).**

· **CPJ demands FBI update on the killing of Palestinian-American journalist Shireen Abu Akleh, four years after her death:** The Committee to Protect Journalists [wrote](#) to the Department of Justice and FBI Director Kash Patel on Thursday demanding a public progress update on the federal investigation into the 2022 killing of Palestinian-American Al Jazeera journalist Shireen Abu Akleh, who was shot dead by Israeli forces while covering army raids in Jenin in the occupied West Bank while wearing a clearly marked press vest. The CPJ said the investigation has seen no formal witness interviews despite multiple witnesses willing to cooperate, and no signs of FBI evidence-gathering in Israel or Palestine, calling the stagnant status of the case "inconsistent with ensuring the security of U.S. citizens anywhere in the

world.” Abu Akleh’s family said Thursday that “justice remains elusive,” as the CPJ noted that Israel has killed 258 journalists and media workers since her death—more than any government on record—with independent investigations by CNN, the Associated Press, and the Washington Post having concluded she was deliberately targeted.

U.S. News

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

- **Federal court strikes down Trump’s 10% tariff:** A divided panel of the Court of International Trade **ruled** Thursday that President Donald Trump violated the law when he imposed a 10% tariff on most U.S. imports under an obscure provision of the Trade Act of 1974, finding he failed to meet the legal threshold required to invoke the measure. The ruling explicitly blocked the collection of the tariff only from the small businesses and states that brought the suit, leaving the broader application of the ruling uncertain as the Trump administration is expected to appeal the decision. Trump signaled he would not relent, telling reporters, “We get one ruling, and we do it a different way.” The administration is expected to announce new tariffs in July, using yet another provision of the Trade Act of 1974 as its justification.

- **Trump extends EU tariff deadline to July 4:** President Donald Trump **announced** Thursday he would give the European Union until July 4 to ratify last year’s trade framework, threatening higher tariff rates if the bloc’s parliament fails to finalize the agreement, in what appeared to be a retreat from his announcement last Friday that 25% tariffs on EU autos would take effect this week. Trump said the extension followed a “great call” with European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, but expressed frustration that the European Parliament had yet to approve his proposal. “A promise was made that the EU would deliver their side of the Deal and, as per Agreement, cut their Tariffs to ZERO!” Trump said in a post on Truth Social. “I agreed to give her until our Country’s 250th Birthday or, unfortunately, their Tariffs would immediately jump to much higher levels.”

- **Federal judge permanently bars DOGE from canceling \$100 million in humanities grants:** U.S. District Judge **Colleen McMahon** in Manhattan permanently **barred** the Trump administration from terminating more than 1,400 National Endowment for the Humanities grants worth over \$100 million, ruling on Thursday that DOGE lacked legal authority to cancel the congressionally approved funding and that doing so violated the First and Fifth Amendments. McMahon specifically condemned the administration’s use of ChatGPT to

identify and target grants associated with diversity, equity, and inclusion as “a textbook example of unconstitutional viewpoint discrimination.”

- **New York passes restrictions on ICE cooperation:** New York Gov. **Kathy Hochul (D)** [announced](#) Thursday that a sweeping package of immigration enforcement restrictions had been included in the state budget deal, prohibiting formal cooperation agreements between state and local officials and Immigration and Customs Enforcement, banning ICE from using local jails to house detainees, barring ICE searches of homes, hospitals, churches, and schools without a judge-signed warrant, and prohibiting federal and state agents from wearing masks on duty. The law does not, as some critics pointed out, address informal communications between local law enforcement and ICE; Hochul reportedly fought to prevent these from being prohibited. Earlier this week, Border czar **Tom Homan** threatened to “flood the zone” with ICE agents if the measure passed.

- **Trump administration reviewing Mexico’s 53 U.S. consulates, raising prospect of closures:** The Trump administration is [conducting](#) a review of all 53 Mexican consulates operating in the United States that could result in some being closed, a State Department official said Thursday, without providing a reason for the review. “The Department of State is constantly reviewing all aspects of American foreign relations to ensure they are in line with the President’s America First foreign policy agenda and advance American interests,” he said. Mexico operates the most extensive diplomatic network of any country in the United States, with its consulates providing Mexican citizens living there with identification documents, legal assistance, and other services.

- **Bipartisan House commission urges Disney, Warner Bros., NBA, and NFL to end UAE partnerships over Sudan genocide role:** Representatives **James McGovern (D-Mass.)** and **Christopher Smith (R-N.J.)**, co-chairs of the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission, have [written](#) to the chief executives of the Walt Disney Company, Warner Bros. Discovery, the NBA, and the NFL urging them to sever their UAE partnerships, citing the Gulf nation’s role in arming the Rapid Support Forces paramilitary group responsible for genocide and atrocities in Sudan. The letters argue that the partnerships give the UAE “public relations cover to obscure and sportswash its role in fueling the genocide and crimes against humanity in Sudan.” Warner Bros. Discovery currently operates a theme park in the Emirates, Disney has plans to open one, and the NBA partners with the country through its sponsorship of the “Emirates NBA Cup.”

- **Trump Justice Department settles with price-fixing meat industry company Agri Stats:** The Trump Justice Department announced a settlement on Thursday with Agri Stats, a firm accused of sharing proprietary pricing, production, and profit data with nearly every major broiler chicken, turkey, and pork processor, and allowing these companies to fix their

prices. Rather than dissolving the company, or bringing it to trial (one was scheduled later this month), the settlement merely expands access to Agri Stats reports to retailers and restaurants, which the Justice Department claims will lower meat prices, but which critics say will primarily benefit large buyers who can afford the subscription while allowing processors to continue coordinating their prices. “Given that the complaint addressed two decades of illegal conduct to hike food prices, one might reasonably expect punishment, not permission,” one expert told David Dayen of The American Prospect. His full piece on the case is available [here](#).

- **Pro-Israel PAC launches \$400,000 ad blitz on behalf of Jasmeet Bains:** Democratic Majority for Israel has placed a \$400,000-plus ad buy in California’s 22nd Congressional District ahead of the state’s June 2 primary, backing state Assemblymember **Jasmeet Bains** of Delano over progressive challenger **Randy Villegas**, days after Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee leadership added Bains to its “Red to Blue” funding program. Bains recently walked back past remarks suggesting Israel’s military actions in Gaza constituted a genocide, while Villegas—backed by **Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.)**—has called for curtailing U.S. military funding to Israel and criticized Bains’s reversal. More on this ad buy, and the state of this race, from Luke Goldstein at the Lever, [here](#).

Other International News

- **U.S. imposes more sanctions on Cuba:** Secretary of State Marco Rubio [announced](#) on Thursday that the U.S. would impose additional sanctions on three Cuban entities and individuals, including GAESA—a Cuban state-owned conglomerate tied to its military that manages businesses across tourism, retail, and distribution—along with its executive president, Ania Guillermina Lastres Morera, and Moa Nickel SA, a Cuban-Canadian nickel mining joint venture. The move is expected to deal a significant blow to Cuba’s already fragile economy amid Trump’s hardened blockade. On the same day, a group of United Nations human rights experts issued a formal warning that Trump’s January fuel blockade on Cuba constitutes “energy starvation” with grave consequences for human rights, noting that fuel scarcity is preventing people from reaching hospitals and children from attending school, while Cuba’s health system faces a backlog of more than 96,000 pending surgeries, including 11,000 for children.

- **Lula says Trump told him he would not invade Cuba:** After his visit to the White House on Thursday, Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva [said](#) President Trump privately indicated to him that he was “not thinking about invading Cuba.” Lula called Trump’s remarks “a significant sign” that diplomacy may still be possible. Trump said in March he

would “have the honor of taking Cuba” and has repeatedly threatened military action against the island nation.

· **Former President of Honduras discusses covert disinformation network targeting Latin American left in leaked calls:**

Leaked audio recordings [released](#) through the “Hondurasgate” project and reported by Diario Red allegedly expose a covert network involving former Honduran President Juan Orlando Hernández, Trump-aligned Republicans, and allies of Argentine President Javier Milei, which planned to fund a U.S.-based disinformation operation targeting the left-wing governments of Mexico, Colombia, and Honduras. In one alleged exchange, Hernández claims Milei pledged \$350,000 in support and says “files” were being prepared against Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum and Colombian President Gustavo Petro. A separate recording, previously reported by Drop Site News, allegedly captures Hernández claiming that Israeli-linked donors and “a group of rabbis” helped finance his pardon by President Donald Trump following his U.S. narco-trafficking conviction, and that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu played a role in securing his release. More on this case is available from El País [here](#).

· **Mexican opposition PRI petitions U.S. to designate ruling Morena party a terrorist organization:**

Alejandro Moreno, head of Mexico’s Institutional Revolutionary Party, formally [petitioned](#) the U.S. State Department, Justice Department, and Treasury to designate the ruling National Regeneration Movement—known as Morena—as a Foreign Terrorist Organization, alleging that the party has ties to the country’s drug cartels. Morena’s new party president, Ariadna Montiel, rejected the move as an attempt at “foreign intervention.”

· **Russia and Ukraine trade ceasefire violations ahead of Victory Day celebrations:**

Russia and Ukraine [accused](#) each other Friday of violating ceasefires each had separately declared, as President Vladimir Putin prepared to hold his annual World War Two Victory Day parade in Moscow under unprecedented security, with no military equipment on display due to the threat of Ukrainian attack. Putin unilaterally declared a two-day ceasefire for Friday and Saturday to cover the celebrations, which Kyiv rejected as insufficient, calling instead for an indefinite truce—a demand Moscow ignored. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said Russian forces continued striking Ukrainian positions overnight, while Ukraine said it struck a Russian oil refinery in Perm for the second consecutive day and hit a separate oil facility in Yaroslavl. Russia has warned that any Ukrainian disruption of Saturday’s Red Square parade would trigger a massive missile strike on Kyiv, and has advised foreign diplomats to evacuate the Ukrainian capital if such an attack occurs.

· **Thai and Cambodian leaders commit to seek peace at ASEAN meetings:**

Thai Prime Minister Anutin Charnvirakul and Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Manet [agreed](#) at ASEAN meetings in the Philippines on Wednesday to pursue trust-building measures and advance a

fragile ceasefire between their countries. Fighting along their shared border last year killed close to 150 people and displaced at least 300,000. The talks, overseen by Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., came amid fresh strain after Thailand unilaterally terminated a joint offshore energy exploration agreement with Cambodia earlier this week, prompting Phnom Penh to announce it would seek a formal resolution to those of its Gulf of Thailand claims which overlap with Bangkok's at the UN.

- **Fighters linked to Al-Qaeda kill at least 30 in central Mali:** Al-Qaeda-affiliated fighters **killed** at least 30 people in attacks on two villages in Mali's Mopti region on Wednesday, according to AFP. Mali has been in crisis since April 25, when Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin joined forces with the Tuareg-dominated Azawad Liberation Front to strike at Mali's military government, killing Defense Minister Sadio Camara, driving Russian-aligned troops from the strategic northern town of Kidal, and storming a prison complex housing 2,500 inmates near Bamako. JNIM has since announced a blockade of the capital by establishing checkpoints on roads leading into the city.

- **ISWAP fighters attack Nigerian army base in Borno state:** Fighters suspected to belong to the Islamic State West Africa Province **stormed** a Nigerian army Forward Operating Base in Magumeri, Borno state, early Thursday morning, killing at least two soldiers and wounding the commanding officer. The military said its counterinsurgency forces successfully repelled the assault, killing "scores" of ISWAP fighters and recovering anti-aircraft guns, AK-47 rifles, machine guns, rocket-propelled grenades, and approximately 20 motorcycles from the assailants.

- **Britain's Labour suffers historic losses in local elections:** Nigel Farage's far-right Reform UK party **swept** hundreds of local council seats across England in nationwide elections Thursday. Reform made deep inroads into traditional Labour strongholds in working-class northern England and appeared poised for strong showings in Scotland and Wales—where, if early numbers hold, Labour would not come first in Welsh-wide elections for the first time in over a century. Starmer acknowledged Friday that "the results are tough" but dismissed calls to resign. The left-wing Green Party recorded gains in London, and Zoë Garbett became the first directly elected Green mayor, winning the mayoralty in the former Labour stronghold of Hackney.