

CLAWS Newsletter



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by Suyash Dwivedi

Domestic Developments

24 June ([The Times Of Israel](#)): Israeli Defence Forces announce success in neutralising Akram Abu Madi, involved in Oct 7 attack.

Israeli military operations in the Gaza Strip continued this week, with the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) announcing the killing of Akram Abu Madi, whom it identified as a Hamas military operative involved in the October 7, 2023, attack on Israel. According to the IDF, Abu Madi had recently been working to rebuild Hamas's operational capabilities and support attacks against Israeli forces and civilians. The military also reported detaining an unarmed suspected Hamas operative near the Kerem Shalom crossing for questioning, stating that there was no infiltration into Israeli territory. Separately, the IDF said it destroyed four rocket launchers in Gaza that had allegedly been installed by armed groups after the October ceasefire and assessed them as posing an immediate threat.

Meanwhile, ceasefire negotiations remain deadlocked. Senior Hamas official Taher al-Nunu accused Israel of undermining talks by seeking changes to the ceasefire framework, including conditions related to humanitarian aid, the future governance of Gaza, and the disarmament of Palestinian armed groups. He also said Hamas had received multiple revised proposals from the US-backed Board of Peace. Israel maintains that security concerns require continued military operations and says it now controls approximately 60 percent of Gaza, while both sides continue to accuse each other of violating the ceasefire.

25 June ([The Times of Israel](#)): IDF announces killing PIJ commander in airstrike.

The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) announced that an Israeli airstrike in Khan Younis, southern Gaza, on Tuesday killed Adam Muhammad Ibrahim Abu Hadid, whom it identified as a commander in the Palestinian Islamic Jihad's (PIJ) weapons production unit. According to the IDF, the unit is responsible for manufacturing and supplying weapons to the group's military wing. The military said Abu Hadid oversaw infrastructure used for weapons production and alleged that he posed an immediate threat to Israeli forces and civilians, leading to the targeted strike.

26 June ([The Times of Israel](#)): Anti-Hamas Protests Erupt Across Gaza.

Hundreds of Palestinians demonstrated against Hamas at some 18 locations across Gaza, the first coordinated show of public dissent in roughly a year. Organisers, some based abroad, said the "June 26" protests aimed to keep pressure on the group even without immediate results. Hamas, though militarily degraded, has continued to assert control over areas the IDF has not occupied, including through the killing of rivals and suspected collaborators. The demonstrations occurred against the backdrop of a stalled US-backed transition plan under which Hamas was to disarm and cede administration of Gaza to a transitional authority, a step the group has so far refused to take.

27 June ([Iran International](#)): Hezbollah Secretary General rejects Lebanon-Israel framework agreement.

Hezbollah Secretary-General Naim Qassem on Saturday rejected the Israel-Lebanon framework agreement signed in Washington, describing it as invalid, a humiliation, and a surrender of Lebanese sovereignty. He called for the agreement to be replaced by the Iran-US memorandum and warned that any attempt to link Israel's withdrawal from southern Lebanon to Hezbollah's disarmament would cross the group's stated "red lines," underscoring its continued opposition to such conditions.

2 July ([Asharq al-Awsat](#)): Syria Names Transitional Parliament Lawmakers

Syrian authorities released the names of 70 lawmakers appointed by interim President Ahmad al-Sharaa to a 210-member transitional parliament, clearing the way for the body's first session. Two-thirds of the chamber had earlier been selected via regional electoral colleges. The parliament will operate under a presidential system established since al-Sharaa's forces ousted Bashar al-Assad in late 2024. The move marked a milestone in Syria's political transition, though the body wields limited independent power. Officials said priorities for the new legislature include economic recovery legislation and continued efforts to insulate Syria from regional volatility linked to the Israel-Lebanon and US-Iran conflicts.

5 July ([Syrian Arab News Agency](#)): Houthi-Government Clashes and Red Sea Ship Attack in Yemen

Yemen's Houthi rebels killed 16 troops aligned with the internationally recognised government near the port city of Hodeidah, among the deadliest clashes between the sides in years,

according to security sources. Separately, Britain's UKMTO maritime agency reported a cargo ship came under attack in the Red Sea off Yemen's coast, with a skiff opening fire before retreating with its identification transponder switched off. The incidents underscored persistent instability in Yemen's civil conflict even as the broader Red Sea shipping crisis had shown signs of easing earlier in 2026, before renewed Houthi activity later in the month.

7-8 July ([The Times of Israel](#), [The Times of Israel](#)): IDF Kills Several Hamas Nukhba Commanders in Gaza

The Israeli military and Shin Bet said strikes killed several Hamas figures linked to the October 7 attack, including Nukhba Force cell commanders Ahmad Yahya Ibrahim Batsh and Yahya Saeed Mohammed Hamdan, the latter tied to the raid on the Re'im base. A separate strike targeted a vehicle belonging to Hamas spokesman Hazem Qassem; he was not inside, but his bodyguard was killed. Gaza's Hamas-run health ministry reported additional civilian deaths in the same strikes, including a director of an Egyptian aid organization. The IDF said the operations were part of its continuing effort to prevent Hamas from rebuilding its military wing under cover of the ceasefire.

10 July ([The Times of Israel](#)): IDF Says Three More Hamas Commanders Killed in Gaza

The Israeli military announced three additional Hamas commanders were killed in Gaza airstrikes, including Yahya Saeed Mohammed Hamdan of the Nukhba Force, who the IDF said had taken part in the October 7 raid on the Re'im base housing the Gaza Division headquarters. The military said Hamdan had recently worked to rebuild attack capabilities in southern Gaza. The IDF also reported demolishing roughly 1.2 miles of Hamas tunnels in the north. Officials said the strikes reflected a sustained campaign against Hamas's residual command structure despite the group's diminished capacity following nearly three years of war.

12 July ([Saudi Gazette](#)): Syria's New Parliament Holds First Session

Syria's newly appointed transitional parliament convened for the first time since Bashar al-Assad's fall, with members taking the constitutional oath in Damascus. President Ahmad al-Sharaa told lawmakers Syria was "writing a new chapter" in its history and urged them to place "national interest above all," citing economic recovery and public services as priorities, according to state news agency SANA. The session came more than 18 months after al-Sharaa's

forces toppled Assad. Analysts noted the transitional government continues to navigate pressure from Washington over its posture toward Hezbollah in Lebanon, alongside Israel's continued military presence in southern Syria.

16 July ([The Times of Israel](#)): IDF Says It Now Controls 60% of Gaza

A senior Israeli officer said the IDF now controls roughly 60 percent of the Gaza Strip and that another large-scale Hamas cross-border invasion is "no longer possible." The military said it destroyed four Hamas weapons depots holding assault rifles, rocket-propelled grenades and explosives in central Gaza, and killed a Hamas platoon commander involved in the October 7 attack in the north. Israel has continued to expand its footprint under the security-zone concept it says is needed to prevent Hamas's regeneration, even as ceasefire negotiations over disarmament, governance and troop withdrawal remain deadlocked in Cairo-mediated talks.

19 July ([The Arab Weekly](#)): Syria's President Reshuffles Security Leadership

President Ahmad al-Sharaa overhauled Syria's security and intelligence apparatus, expanding the powers of Interior Minister Anas Khattab, who was also named head of the National Security Bureau overseeing the country's security agencies, and installing a new intelligence chief. The shake-up came as Syria's transitional government sought to consolidate control following the recent convening of its first post-Assad parliament. The move was seen as part of al-Sharaa's broader effort to centralise security decision-making as Damascus navigates pressure from Washington, continued Israeli operations in the south, and lingering instability tied to sectarian tensions.

19 July ([Syrian Arab News Agency](#)): Two Palestinians Killed as Settler Attacks Sweep West Bank

Israeli settlers intensified attacks across the West Bank, torching homes and a mosque in Al-Tuwani in the Masafer Yatta area and vandalizing property under the protection of Israeli forces, according to the Palestinian news agency WAFA and SANA. Two Palestinians, identified as Awda Farakhna and Ahmad Abu Mukh, were killed near Ramallah amid coordinated raids, arson and livestock theft reported in Nablus, Jenin, Bethlehem and Jericho governorates. The Palestinian National Council called for urgent international intervention. Israeli forces separately arrested six Palestinians during overnight raids, as settler violence continued to rise sharply across the territory.

External Affairs

26 June ([The Times of Israel](#)): Israel and Lebanon Sign Framework Deal in Washington.

Israel and Lebanon signed a US-brokered framework agreement at the State Department, with Secretary of State Marco Rubio hosting Israeli and Lebanese envoys. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Israel would keep forces in its south Lebanon buffer zone "until Hezbollah disarms," while allowing the Lebanese army to begin taking over designated pilot zones. Netanyahu cast the deal as a rebuff to Iranian influence in Lebanon. The agreement builds on a fragile ceasefire that ended major Hezbollah-Israel hostilities but has not stopped periodic cross-border strikes. Lebanese officials framed the pact as a step toward restoring state sovereignty over the south, though implementation details, including a security annex, remained contested.

28 June ([Anadolu Agency](#)): Qatari Civilian Killed by Drone Shrapnel Amid Iran Tensions

Qatar reported that a citizen was killed by shrapnel linked to regional "military operations," amid continuing exchanges between the United States and Iran following their February 2026 war and a fragile ceasefire. The IDF also announced it had demolished a major Hezbollah tunnel in Lebanon after US pressure had previously delayed the operation, and Israel held funerals for a soldier killed fighting Hezbollah. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan renewed criticism of Israeli policy in Gaza, vowing Ankara would keep working to counter what he called Israel's expansionist actions. Israeli intelligence officials reportedly warned separately that Hamas was rebuilding its capacity to resume attacks.

1 July ([CNN](#)): US-Iran Talks Continue in Doha as Hormuz Traffic Holds

US Vice President JD Vance said indirect technical talks between American and Iranian negotiators in Qatar were "going well," weeks after Washington and Tehran signed a memorandum of understanding on June 17 meant to end their conflict and reopen the Strait of Hormuz. Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi warned of an "immediate powerful response" to any renewed Israeli strike and repeated calls for the US to restrain its ally. US Central Command said shipping through Hormuz had stayed broadly consistent, with roughly

35 commercial vessels transiting in one 24-hour period, though the truce remained fragile amid disputes over its implementation.

1 July ([The Times of Israel](#)): IDF Strike Kills Hamas Platoon Commander in Southern Gaza

The Israeli military said a strike killed Adel Jihad Mohammad Asfour, described as a Hamas platoon commander who had directed sniper and explosive-device attacks against Israeli troops during the war. The IDF said Asfour had recently been working both to advance further attacks and to help rebuild Hamas's military capabilities in the area, and was deemed an imminent threat. The strike was one of several in this period targeting mid- and senior-level Hamas figures the IDF says are exploiting the ceasefire to reconstitute the group's armed wing, part of a broader Israeli campaign that has intensified since May.

6 July ([Al Jazeera](#)): Israeli Drone Strike on Car Kills Four in South Lebanon

An Israeli drone strike on a vehicle in Nabatieh al-Fawqa killed four people, Lebanon's National News Agency reported, including a school principal, her mother, a foreign domestic worker and a Syrian national returning from checking on a family home. The Israeli military said it was targeting Hezbollah sites and fighters in the area. The strike was among a series of intermittent Israeli attacks on southern Lebanon that have continued despite the ceasefire and the newly signed framework agreement, deepening criticism from Lebanese officials that Israel is not upholding its side of recent understandings

10 July ([Iran International](#)): Satellite Images Suggest Iran Rebuilding Nuclear Sites

CNN reported satellite imagery showing apparent repair and reconstruction activity at Iranian nuclear and missile facilities, including the Bushehr nuclear plant and the suspected underground Pickaxe Mountain site, taken in late June and early July. Russia's Rosatom said it had begun returning staff to Bushehr. The findings emerged as mediators worked to shore up the fragile US-Iran memorandum of understanding reached on June 17. Israel's defense minister said the IDF stood ready to resume strikes on Iran if necessary, while the Trump administration signaled it did not want Israel to re-enter the fighting for fear of losing control of the confrontation.

12 July ([Oman Observer](#)): US Strikes Iran Again as Tehran Hits Two UAE Tankers

The United States launched fresh strikes on Iranian targets after Iran's Revolutionary Guard said it had disabled two "rogue supertankers" that ignored warnings in the Strait of Hormuz. The UAE said Iranian missiles struck its tankers al-Bahiya and Mombasa in Omani waters, killing an Indian crew member. President Donald Trump floated a 20 percent toll for safe passage through Hormuz, an idea his own secretary of state had previously dismissed as unworkable. The exchange marked a serious escalation of the maritime dimension of the US-Iran conflict, further straining the June memorandum of understanding meant to de-escalate hostilities.

14 July ([Oman Observer](#)): Global fuel prices surge as Iran and the USA share fresh strikes

Global oil prices surged as renewed tensions between the United States and Iran heightened concerns over energy supplies and maritime security in the Strait of Hormuz. Prices rose by more than 9% after US President Donald Trump announced the reimposition of a US naval blockade on Iranian ports and proposed a 20% charge on all cargo transiting the strategic waterway. In response, Iran rejected US involvement in the Strait's management, with Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi criticising the proposal and Iranian state media reporting that its military fired warning shots at two vessels passing through the Strait. Analysts said the escalating dispute could disrupt shipping through one of the world's most important energy transit routes, adding uncertainty to global commodity markets. The developments also weighed on financial markets, with the tech-heavy Nasdaq Composite falling about 1.5% as investors shifted toward lower-risk assets amid concerns that disagreements over the Strait of Hormuz, sanctions, and Iran's nuclear programme could undermine prospects for a lasting de-escalation.

21 July ([MTV Lebanon](#)): Lebanese President Aoun Meets US President Trump at White House

Lebanese President Joseph Aoun met President Donald Trump at the White House, days after a framework agreement between Israel and Lebanon was signed in Washington. Trump said Lebanon has a "Hezbollah problem" but indicated he would be willing to engage the group if Aoun requested it. The meeting came amid continued cross-border strikes and Hezbollah's

public rejection of the framework deal as an infringement on Lebanese sovereignty. Discussions reportedly focused on the pace of the Lebanese army's takeover of security responsibilities in the south and mechanisms for Hezbollah's eventual disarmament under the agreement.

22 July ([The Times of Israel](#)): Trump Says Iran Not Yet Ready for a Deal

Speaking at a campaign rally in Georgia, President Trump said Iran remained unwilling to reach a durable agreement, claiming Tehran repeatedly seeks to alter terms after accepting them. He said continued US strikes on Iranian assets along the Strait of Hormuz were aimed at preventing Iran from developing a nuclear weapon, adding Iran would be "ready very soon" to negotiate seriously. Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi, meeting his Iraqi counterpart in Baghdad, continued to press for an end to what Tehran calls US aggression, as the conflict's toll on regional shipping and energy markets persisted.

23 July ([Saudi Gazette](#)): US and Saudi Arabia Sign Nuclear Cooperation Agreement

The US Energy Department confirmed Washington and Riyadh had signed a civil nuclear cooperation agreement and a related bilateral safeguards deal, with Energy Secretary Chris Wright and Saudi Energy Minister Prince Abdulaziz bin Salman signing the pacts. US officials described the agreements as the legal foundation for a long-term, multibillion-dollar partnership advancing nuclear nonproliferation and economic goals. The deal came as President Trump said Iran was "not ready to make a deal" over its nuclear program, insisting continued strikes on Iranian assets near the Strait of Hormuz were necessary to prevent Tehran from acquiring a weapon.

23 July ([Saudi Gazette](#)): Houthis Claim Attack on Two Saudi Oil Tankers

Yemen's Iran-aligned Houthis claimed responsibility for an attack on two Saudi oil tankers, named Encelia and Layla, transiting the Red Sea, saying the vessels had violated a Houthi-declared naval blockade. It was the group's first claimed attack on commercial shipping in months, opening what analysts described as a new front tied to the broader US-Iran conflict. A separate maritime security alert from the Joint Maritime Information Centre said Houthi forces had completed preparations, including missile and drone deployments, to strike shipping near the Bab el-Mandeb strait at the southern end of the Red Sea.

About the Author

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