

Israel Escalates Strikes in Syria, Denounces Julani's Rule

THE EARLY PHOENIX

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The Region's Top Five

★ **Iran Unveils Missile City, Faces U.S. Pressure And Currency Crash**

★ **Riyadh Talks Lead To Ukraine-Russia Ceasefire Agreement Brokered By U.S.**

★ **Houthis Strike Israel And U.S. Forces While Vowing Escalation**

★ **Türkiye Unveils New Era In Drone Warfare With Supersonic Missile Test**

★ **Israel Passes Budget During Protests And Economic Concerns**

★ **SYRIA**

1. Israel Escalates Strikes in Syria, Denounces Julani's Rule

Israel expanded its airstrikes in southern Syria, targeting Daraa and the Tadmur military airport in Homs for the second time in two days. The attacks caused civilian deaths and mass displacement. The Israeli government cites threats from armed groups now ruling Syria—specifically referencing “terrorist militias” formerly aligned with al-Qaeda and ISIS—and warned it would not allow Assad-era weapons to fall into their hands. [Damascus condemned the strikes](#) as violations of sovereignty and demanded an international

investigation. Israeli analyst Meir Masri stated that Tel Aviv views Julani's rule as illegitimate and sees no reason to trust the new government, [citing its exclusion of minorities and links to extremist factions](#). Syrian commentators countered that the new leadership had disbanded terror groups and cooperated with the anti-ISIS coalition. They accused Israel of exploiting instability to preserve chaos and prevent a functional Syrian state. Israel confirmed that its strikes will continue to prevent hostile forces from acquiring advanced weaponry.

2.Trump Officials Demand Syria Expel Foreign Fighters To Ease Sanctions

The Trump administration issued a firm list of demands to Syria's new government, [conditioning any sanctions relief on strict limitations against foreign officials and fighters](#). During the Syria Support Conference in Brussels, U.S. Deputy Secretary Natasha Barchasky directly handed the list to Syrian Foreign Minister Assad Al-Shibani, marking Washington's first formal engagement with the new Damascus leadership.

3.Syrian Security Receives Suicide Drones From Latakia Local Leaders

Syrian Interior Ministry confirmed receiving FPV suicide drones from residents of [Qardaha in Latakia](#) after talks with community leaders. The drones, remnants from the ousted Assad regime, were handed over during a meeting with local peace committee representatives and security officials.

4.Two Mystery Tankers Deliver Fuel To Syria During Power Crisis

Two unidentified tankers carrying [100,000 tons of crude](#) oil and 5,600 tons of gasoline arrived at Syria's Baniyas port on Tuesday. The deliveries aim to ease Syria's severe power

shortages, where only two to three hours of daily electricity is available. Infrastructure damage continues limiting electricity production, making supply increases only a partial solution to the crisis.

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★ IRAQ

5.Iraq Proposes Law Granting Hashd Equal Powers As Army

A new draft law restructures Iraq's Popular Mobilization Forces, granting it military-equivalent powers and linking it to the commander-in-chief. The law authorizes armament for constitutional defense and tasks Hashd with protecting democracy and national unity and combating terrorism. It also allows advisory roles on national security, overlapping with intelligence agency responsibilities.

6.Iraq Imports \$11.2 Billion In Iranian Goods During Growing Trade Ties

Iraq imported \$11.2 billion worth of non-oil goods from Iran between March 2024 and February 2025, solidifying its position as Tehran's second-largest export market. Over 2,200 Iranian products entered Iraq during the year, as both countries pursue a shared goal of boosting annual trade to \$20 billion through deeper economic integration.

7.Iraq Turns To Four Countries For LNG After U.S. Waiver Ends

Iraq announced plans to import liquefied natural gas from Qatar, Algeria, Indonesia, and Brazil to maintain power plant operations after the U.S. ended its waiver on Iranian energy imports. Baghdad will use a floating platform to receive 400 million cubic feet daily, supporting up to 2,000 megawatts. A

40-kilometer pipeline is also under construction to connect the gas to Iraq's national grid.

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★IRAN

8.Iran Unveils Missile City, Faces U.S. Pressure And Currency Crash

Iran's Revolutionary Guard unveiled one of its largest underground missile bases, containing thousands of precision-guided Emad and Kheibar Shekan missiles. Top military officials attended the ceremony on March 25, showcasing Iran's expanding missile capabilities. Simultaneously, Tehran is preparing a formal response to President Trump's ultimatum, offering nuclear talks or facing possible military action. Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi confirmed internal discussions, while Iran dismissed European threats of renewed UN sanctions. In parallel, the U.S. sanctioned three Iranian intelligence officials over the disappearance of former FBI agent Robert Levinson, accusing them of direct involvement. As geopolitical pressure intensifies, Iran's currency plunged below one million rials per dollar, reflecting deepening economic instability. The ongoing U.S. "maximum pressure" campaign and Iran's hardened stance signal a dangerous escalation with potential regional consequences.

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★YEMEN

9.Houthi Strike Israel And U.S. Forces While Vowing Escalation

Yemen's Houthi forces launched drone strikes on Israeli military sites near Tel Aviv and targeted the U.S. aircraft carrier Harry Truman in the Red Sea. Spokesperson Yahya

[Saree](#) confirmed the operations and pledged continued attacks until the war on Gaza ends. In retaliation, the U.S. military carried out [17 airstrikes on Houthi missile platforms](#), bunkers, and weapons depots [in Saada](#) and Amran provinces. Key commanders, including the top missile officer, were reportedly killed. Despite these strikes, the Houthis reiterated their missile campaign against Israel, asserting that their arsenal remains intact. Senior Houthi officials reaffirmed full support for Hezbollah and Palestine, warning regional actors against siding with Israel and the U.S. Leader [Mahdi al-Mashat](#) vowed the continuation of attacks regardless of U.S. actions, framing the confrontation as a resistance effort. The situation signals a deepening regional conflict with a rising risk of broader war.

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★ **TÜRKIYE**

10. Türkiye And the U.S. Enter a New Phase Of Strategic Relations In Washington Talks

Turkish Foreign Minister [Hakan Fidan](#) met U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio in Washington, marking [a new phase in Türkiye-U.S. relations under President Trump](#). The talks signaled renewed momentum, with both sides discussing deeper defense cooperation, lifting CAATSA sanctions, reentry into the F-35 program, and expanding bilateral trade to \$100 billion. Fidan emphasized alignment on Syria's stability, Gaza ceasefire efforts, and counterterrorism, highlighting a shift toward closer strategic coordination.

11. Türkiye Unveils New Era In Drone Warfare With Supersonic Missile Test

The Bayraktar TB3, the world's [first drone capable](#) of short-runway naval takeoff and landing, successfully fired a supersonic İHA-122 missile in its first live test. Developed by

Baykar and Roketsan, the drone struck a sea target with pinpoint accuracy from over 50 km. The test signals a leap in Türkiye's drone capabilities, ushering in a new phase in smart warfare systems.

12. Türkiye Tightens Monetary Policy, Withdraws \$25 Billion in One Week

Türkiye's central bank withdrew \$25 billion in excess liquidity within a week, reducing surplus cash [to \\$6.2 billion—the lowest in four months](#). The move follows recent market turbulence and aims to reinforce tight monetary conditions. For the first time in two decades, the bank issued bonds to drain liquidity and raised the overnight lending rate by 200 basis points to 46 percent.

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★ [ISRAEL](#)

13. Pro-Hamas Rallies Planned Globally As Anti-Hamas Protests Emerge In Gaza

Hamas has called for global demonstrations [from Friday to Sunday](#) to demand an end to the Gaza blockade and defend Al-Aqsa Mosque, urging international solidarity. Tribal leaders in central Gaza also announced marches pressing for open crossings and immediate aid. Separately, in a rare act of dissent, hundreds [in Beit Lahia](#) protested against Hamas, calling for its withdrawal from Gaza after 18 months of war, highlighting growing frustration within the enclave. The Israeli military estimated [over 150 Hamas](#) fighters and members of other armed groups have been killed since it resumed its offensive on Gaza last week. The Israeli Air Force, Navy, and Ground Forces have struck over 420 targets during the operation. The Israeli military has confirmed the deaths of 10 senior political and mid-level military Hamas leaders in

airstrikes, with other Hamas leaders still unconfirmed as dead.

14. Katz Vows Escalation As Hamas Faces Intensifying Pressure Over Hostages

Israeli Defense Minister Israel Katz approved expanded IDF operations in Gaza, warning Hamas of a heavier price if it refuses a hostage deal. "We will seize territory, eliminate operatives, and destroy infrastructure until Hamas is defeated," Katz said. IDF Chief Lt. Gen. Eyal Zamir echoed calls for escalation, citing Hamas's delay tactics. Plans under consideration include full military occupation, control of aid, and isolating civilians into designated safe zones.

15. Israel Passes Budget During Protests And Economic Concerns

Israel's Knesset passed a \$169 billion budget, narrowly avoiding the collapse of Prime Minister Netanyahu's government ahead of a March 31 deadline. The 66–52 vote followed intense debates and was condemned by opposition figures as corrupt and unjust. Massive protests erupted in Jerusalem, fueled by anger over military-focused spending, the planned dismissal of Shin Bet chief Ronen Bar, and fears of renewed judicial reform. Nine protesters were arrested near parliament. Meanwhile, Moody's maintained Israel's Baa1 credit rating but warned that political instability, rising deficits, and public unrest are eroding investor confidence and threatening economic recovery.

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★ LEBANON

16. Israeli Strike Kills Hezbollah Anti-Armor Unit Chief Hassan Halawi

An Israeli airstrike killed Hezbollah anti-armor unit chief Hassan Halawi, [known as "Osama,"](#) in Qa'qaiyat Al-Jisr, southern Lebanon. Israel confirmed Halawi's assassination, accusing him of arming fighters and coordinating armed operations in southern Lebanon against Israeli targets.

17. U.S. Presses Lebanon To Reach Border Agreement With Israel

Washington is urging Lebanon to accept a [deal with Israel](#) that regulates borders without full normalization but limits Hezbollah's weapons. The proposed agreement exceeds a ceasefire but falls short of diplomatic recognition, focusing on preventing armed operations near Israel's border. U.S. pressure intensifies ahead of envoy Morgan Ortagus' post-Eid visit to Beirut.

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★ [THE GULF](#)

18. Riyadh Talks Lead To Ukraine-Russia Ceasefire Agreement Brokered By U.S.

Following high-level talks [in Riyadh,](#) Ukraine accepted two U.S.-brokered ceasefire agreements with Russia, signaling a major diplomatic advance. The deals, announced Tuesday, ensure safe navigation in the Black Sea and ban strikes on energy infrastructure. Ukrainian Defense Minister Rustem Umerov praised Riyadh's role and welcomed third-party support, highlighting Saudi Arabia's emerging influence in resolving global conflicts.

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★ [EGYPT](#)

19. Egypt Denies Supplying Israel With Military Assistance

Egypt firmly denied claims of [providing military aid to Israel](#), calling them fabricated and spread by outlets hostile to the government since the fall of the Muslim Brotherhood. The State Information Service stressed Egypt's consistent support for Palestinians, its rejection of displacement in Gaza, and its leading role in opposing Israeli aggression and aiding over 75% of humanitarian relief.

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