



Global Watch Daily – July 18, 2026

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A concise summary of significant developments in Israel and the world through a grounded Christian worldview.

Israel & Jerusalem

Recent reports highlight the rising influence of a Democratic Socialists of America-backed candidate in the Wisconsin governor's race as the Democratic field narrows. Following the suspension of Lt. Gov. Sara Rodriguez's campaign, state Representative Francesca Hong, a member of the Democratic Socialists of America known for her anti-Israel activism, and former Lt. Gov. Mandela Barnes have emerged as the leading Democratic contenders ahead of the August 11 primary. Meanwhile, Representative Jake Auchincloss, representing the most Jewish district in New England, defended his vote to cut off aid to Israel, accusing former President Trump and Prime Minister Netanyahu of violating the foundational agreement underpinning U.S. military assistance by initiating war against Iran. Additionally, Representative Adam Smith acknowledged that AIPAC might withdraw support following his vote on U.S. aid to Israel, but emphasized his desire to maintain dialogue, urging the organization to work to gain more allies rather than create adversaries ([JNS](#); [JNS](#); [JNS](#)).

Wars & Security (Israel and Region)

Recent intelligence indicates that Iran has instructed Yemen's Houthi rebels to close the Bab al Mandeb Strait—the critical maritime chokepoint at the southern end of the Red Sea—should the United States strike Iran's power grid. This directive signals Tehran's intent to escalate tensions in response to U.S. military actions. Concurrently, Venezuela remains overwhelmed by the aftermath of two devastating earthquakes on June 24 that have claimed at least 4,829 lives, injured over 16,700, and displaced approximately 18,000 people, severely hampering emergency response efforts and stalling political transition processes. In military developments, Russia has officially acknowledged its new low-cost cruise missile, the 'Banderol,' which has seen increased deployment in Ukraine, marking a notable advancement in Moscow's arsenal ([Long War Journal](#); [Long War Journal](#); [Long War Journal](#)).



Additional developments include Iraq's Ministry of Finance imposing sanctions on individuals and entities linked to Lebanese Hezbollah, mirroring U.S. designations from earlier this year. Iraqi Prime Minister Ali al Zaidi is currently in the United States seeking support for expanded economic measures. Meanwhile, the U.S. has reinstated a naval blockade against Iranian ports and conducted a week-long series of strikes targeting Iran's military assets in response to Tehran's repeated violations, raising concerns about potential unrest in Iran this summer. Reports also confirm Iran's directive to the Houthis to close the Bab al Mandeb Strait if U.S. strikes target Iran's power infrastructure. These moves underscore escalating tensions in the region ([Long War Journal](#); [FDD](#); [FDD](#)).

Further coverage notes that Ireland's lower house of parliament passed legislation criminalizing imports from Israeli settlements in the West Bank, including eastern Jerusalem. This move has been criticized as counterproductive. In Washington, former President Trump has threatened to escalate conflict with Iran, risking repetition of past mistakes. During his official visit to Washington, Iraqi Prime Minister Zaidi met with President Trump and other officials to discuss security cooperation, investment, and efforts to bring weapons held by Iranian-backed militias under state control ([FDD](#); [FDD](#); [Long War Journal](#)).

Syrian authorities intercepted an advanced weapons shipment on July 16, concealed within an Iraqi oil tanker destined for Hezbollah in Lebanon. The shipment included sophisticated equipment such as first-person-view drones, fiber-optic spools, drone warheads, and anti-tank missiles. Analysts note the unraveling of the U.S.-Iran memorandum of understanding, with renewed hostilities and proxy conflicts intensifying across the Gulf region. Discussions continue regarding Europe's shifting stance toward Tehran and Israel's potential re-engagement in active conflict ([Long War Journal](#); [Long War Journal](#)).

Global Macro & Geopolitics

Recent strategic developments include targeted Ukrainian drone strikes against Russian online retail warehouses near Moscow and in Tambov. Ukrainian leadership identified these facilities as major logistics hubs supplying components subject to international sanctions. Meanwhile, nuclear reactor exports have become a significant arena of competition between China and the United States in Southeast Asia, reflecting broader geopolitical rivalry. Market dynamics continue to be heavily influenced by developments in artificial intelligence, with ongoing debates about tariff policies and the realization of AI's economic potential ([BBC News](#); [The Diplomat](#); [Bloomberg](#)).



Additional analysis highlights how regional instability benefits Turkey's strategic position. The ongoing conflicts in Ukraine and Iran have reminded Western allies of Turkey's military and diplomatic value. Concurrently, the United States continues to navigate complex trade and sanction dynamics, including potential new sanctions on Russia and retaliatory measures by China in response to the United Kingdom's nationalization of British Steel ([Bloomberg](#); [Bloomberg](#); [Reuters](#)).

Pestilence & Global Health

Recent scientific advances reveal a naturally occurring bacterium from amphibian intestines that eradicated colorectal tumors in mice with a single dose by both directly attacking cancer cells and activating the immune system. This discovery opens promising avenues for new cancer therapies targeting solid tumors. Additionally, researchers have identified a previously unrecognized immune mechanism that enhances the efficacy of mRNA cancer vaccines by recruiting an unexpected immune cell type, challenging previous assumptions and potentially enabling more tailored and effective treatments. In infectious disease research, scientists have pinpointed a shared vulnerability among deadly gut bacteria such as *E. coli* and *Shigella*: enzymes that degrade the gut's protective mucus layer. Targeting this "Achilles' heel" may lead to a single vaccine capable of preventing multiple major diarrheal diseases ([ScienceDaily](#); [ScienceDaily](#); [ScienceDaily](#)).

Natural Disasters & Signs in the Heavens

Recent seismic activity includes a magnitude 1.9 earthquake located 42 kilometers south-southeast of Nelchina, Alaska, at a depth of 19 kilometers, recorded on July 18, 2026. Additionally, a magnitude 4.8 earthquake occurred along the southern Mid-Atlantic Ridge at a depth of 10 kilometers on July 17, 2026. These events are closely monitored for potential geological impacts ([USGS](#)).

Additional reports note a magnitude 4.1 earthquake near Frazier Park, California, with a depth of 13.09 kilometers, recorded on July 12, 2026. Furthermore, a magnitude 4.9 earthquake struck the Southern East Pacific Rise on July 18, 2026, at a depth of 10 kilometers, with no reported impact on populations within 100 kilometers ([USGS](#); [GDACS](#)).

Middle Eastern Artifacts

Archaeological excavations in the Wadi Tumilat region of Egypt have uncovered a residential complex along with storage and production facilities. Pottery bearing seal



impressions, ten mudbrick graves, and human burials were also discovered, shedding light on the area's historical occupation. Meanwhile, the first season of excavations at Ashdod has commenced, focusing on understanding the function, dating, and layout of a city gate. Volunteer reports provide additional insights into the ongoing work ([BiblePlaces](#); [BiblePlaces](#)).

Further findings at Khirbat Jābir include sculptured marble decorations from a bathhouse, such as a female head, a small Corinthian capital, a bracket adorned with a lion's head, and other richly carved architectural elements. Pottery recovered from the site dates from the Byzantine through the Early Islamic periods, indicating continuous activity during these eras. These discoveries contribute valuable information to the understanding of regional history and culture ([Israel Antiquities Authority](#); [Israel Antiquities Authority](#)).