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Iran Tightens Its Grip on the Strait of Hormuz

Iran's warning that it will progressively tighten its control over the Strait of Hormuz has intensified its resistance to Washington. The Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps reported that three oil tankers struck naval mines while travelling under American military escort, while the US-led Joint Maritime Information Centre has said that several tanker attacks were hit by unidentified projectiles. Seven tankers have reportedly been struck in the Strait since 16 November. The confrontation takes place against the background of the American naval blockade of Iranian ports and Tehran's insistence that it will not reopen the waterway without significant concessions.

Ukraine Extends Its Attacks on Russian Shipping into the Mediterranean

Ukraine has demonstrated a significantly expanded capacity to attack Russian maritime assets, striking vessels associated with Moscow's military logistics in both the Baltic and Mediterranean. On 23 November, President Zelensky confirmed that Ukrainian forces had sunk the Russian naval corvette *Merkury* in Benghazi, Libya, using seven naval drones. Kyiv also claimed responsibility for attacking the cargo vessel *Angara*, which it says was transporting military equipment. The destabilization and fragmentation of Libya following NATO intervention has turned Libya into a dangerous playground for foreign powers and now NATO has brought its proxy Ukraine war to Libya’s doorstep.

The Zionist Entity Continues its Murderous Attacks on Gaza

Zionist air strikes killed seven Palestinians on Tuesday, including Naeem Abu Nahel, Hamas's director of internal security, according to Palestinian medical and security officials. The latest killings follow repeated attacks across Gaza despite the ceasefire that began in October 2025. Gaza's Health Ministry reports that 1,679 Palestinians have been killed and 6,100 injured since the ceasefire took effect. The humanitarian situation remains critical, with damaged infrastructure, inadequate shelter and restrictions on essential supplies compounding the consequences of the military campaign. The so-called international community's unwillingness to enforce its own ceasefire commitments further exposes the hypocrisy of Western claims to defend an international rules-based order.

Ansar Allah Threatens Saudi Ports as Yemen Confrontation Escalates

Ansar Allah warned on Wednesday that it would target Jeddah and other Saudi Red Sea ports if Saudi Arabia attacked Hodeidah, following an evacuation warning issued by the Saudi-led coalition. The threat followed a drone strike on a tower in Riyadh's financial district on Tuesday, which injured at least 11 people according to Saudi authorities. The confrontation has intensified since September, when Ansar Allah forces advanced towards the strategically important Bab el-Mandeb Strait. Britain announced sanctions against the movement and four senior figures on 24 November, citing attacks on commercial shipping and Saudi infrastructure. Despite some rhetoric in favor of its client state, Washington's response has been minimal, leaving Saudi Arabia exposed.

Global Food Security Threatened by Multiple Maritime Conflicts

The World Food Programme warned on Monday that disruptions to shipping through the Black Sea, Strait of Hormuz and Bab el-Mandeb could place food assistance for another 7.3 million people at risk by mid-2027. Executive Director Luke Lindberg told the UN Security Council that additional transport and operational costs could reach $727 million. The agency

has already reduced its planned 2027 assistance target from 110 million to 91 million people. Black Sea wheat and maize traffic has fallen substantially, while attacks on maritime shipping have killed at least 40 crew members. Lindberg called for renewed efforts to establish a humanitarian corridor for Russian and Ukrainian grain, drawing on the UN-brokered initiative that previously enabled nearly 33 million tonnes of Ukrainian grain exports.

Britain Moves Closer to the European Union

Prime Minister Andy Burnham defended his government's new agreement with the European Union in Parliament on Monday, describing it as a major economic opportunity while ruling out rejoining the EU without another referendum. The agreement, concluded at the Brussels summit on 20 November, establishes closer cooperation on food and agricultural trade, links emissions trading systems, creates a youth mobility scheme for up to 100,000 participants from each side and provides for British participation in Erasmus+ from 2027. More significantly, Britain and the EU agreed to deepen defence cooperation, maritime security, intelligence coordination and efforts against Russia's sanctions-evasion networks. The agreement represents a pragmatic reversal of important elements of Brexit, driven by the economic costs of separation and the changing European security environment.

Central European Governments Challenge Brussels Over the Next EU Budget

Poland, Hungary, Slovakia, the Czech Republic and Austria have jointly rejected the proposed EU budget for 2028-2034, increasing pressure on European Council President António Costa ahead of the 26-27 November summit. The five governments argue that the proposed €1.582 trillion framework does not adequately protect agricultural subsidies and cohesion funding, which are particularly important to poorer member states and Central European economies. Hungary and the Czech Republic have also objected to incorporating Ukraine financing into the seven-year budget, arguing that it should be treated separately. The proposal is encountering resistance from several directions: Germany considers the overall spending excessive, while France and the European Parliament have raised their own objections. The dispute exposes competing national priorities beneath Brussels' language of European solidarity. Governments facing domestic economic pressures are increasingly reluctant to finance ambitious common policies without clearer guarantees of national benefit. The argument also illustrates the difficulty of sustaining European unity while simultaneously increasing defence expenditure, supporting Ukraine, financing industrial competitiveness and protecting social spending. Agreement remains elusive, with negotiations expected to continue into December.

COP31 Ends Without Agreement on a Final Climate Pact

The COP31 climate summit in Antalya ended on 22 November without agreement on its central political declaration, following two weeks of negotiations and an additional two days of discussions. The principal disagreements concerned fossil-fuel phase-out commitments and climate finance, with oil-producing countries resisting stronger language on reducing dependence on coal, oil and gas. UN Secretary-General António Guterres expressed disappointment, while climate organisations criticised the compromises over carbon-removal technologies, arguing that they could allow established polluters to postpone genuine emissions reductions. COP31 has exposed the contradiction between Western declarations of climate leadership and their reluctance to subordinate commercial interests to collective environmental obligations.