

Daily



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MAX - MENA Region Daily Summary - July 15, 2026

The following report reviews current events in the MENA region and their possible effect on business continuity and security.

Highlights of the Day

- **MENA:** President Trump holds Situation Room meeting on July 14, vows to strike Iranian powerplants, bridges next week; risk of escalation rises
- **Bahrain & Kuwait:** Iran apparently uses missile carrying cluster munitions, targets warehouses during attacks on July 14; marks escalation
- **Israel:** Knesset passes Security Service Bill, temporarily banning arrest of draft dodgers on July 14; to escalate political tensions
- **Lebanon & Syria:** ISF announces arrest of IS Emir for Syria's southern, central provinces on July 13; indicates IS' use of Lebanon as base

Actionable Items

MENA: EASA on July 14 reinstates advisory for airlines to avoid Gulf airspace; remain cognizant, reconfirm itineraries

Current Situation - The European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) issued an updated advisory advising airlines operating in the Middle East to avoid the airspace of Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, the UAE, and over the Gulf of Oman. EASA attributed the advisory to heightened regional tensions stemming from the ongoing tit-for-tat hostilities between the US and Iran. The agency warned that military activity could occur with little or no warning in the affected airspace and that unpredictable developments, combined with the potential use of missiles, drones, combat aircraft, and air defense systems, pose a high risk to civil aviation at all altitudes. The advisory will remain in effect until July 29.

Recommendations - Those operating or residing in the MENA region on July 15 and over the coming days are advised to remain cognizant of possible flight suspensions and cancellations within the Gulf airspace amid the ongoing escalation, closely monitor regional airspace developments, and reconfirm flight itineraries before travel.

Source: [EASA](#)

Bahrain & Kuwait: Iran apparently uses missile carrying cluster munitions, targets warehouses during attacks on July 14; marks escalation

Current Situation - Unconfirmed reports and footage widely circulated on social media appear to show the detonation of a cluster munition warhead during the attacks on Bahrain. Meanwhile, in Kuwait, footage appears to show an Iranian UAV making a direct impact on a warehouse in the Mina Abdullah Industrial Zone. Iran subsequently claimed that it had targeted a facility in the industrial zone, which it described as the primary logistics and supply hub for US forces.

Assessments & Forecast - While these attacks constitute part of a pattern seen in Iranian attacks, in which Kuwait and Bahrain have been among the most heavily targeted states, the latest strikes are notable. The apparent use of a cluster munition warhead, if confirmed, would mark a shift in Iranian strike tactics, given that Iran has previously only employed such warheads in attacks against Israel. This underscores efforts to increase the destructive effects of its strikes, as cluster munitions disperse multiple submunitions over a wide area. Meanwhile, the attacks in Kuwait indicate that Iran has started identifying and targeting infrastructure that it assesses as facilitating US military operations. Cumulatively, these developments underscore a continued escalation in Iran's strike campaign.

Recommendations - Avoid nonessential travel to Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states at the current juncture. If present in these states, avoid all travel to military installations and energy infrastructure, and industrial facilities due to the continued threat posed by Iran to such sites.

Source: [The Hormuz Report](#) ; [Reuters](#)

Israel: Anti-government march to Knesset slated in Jerusalem on July 15; maintain heightened vigilance

Current Situation - The youth movement “Getting Under the Stretcher” has called for a pro-democracy march to the Knesset in Jerusalem. Participants are scheduled to gather at Paris Square at 17:30 (local time) before embarking on a symbolic “stretcher march” toward the Knesset at 18:30. The march is expected to conclude at the Knesset protest encampment at 20:00 and join the ongoing demonstrations against the draft exemption bill.

Recommendations - Those operating or residing in Jerusalem on July 15 are advised to maintain heightened vigilance in the vicinity of Paris Square, the route to the Knesset, and the Knesset due to planned demonstrations.

Source: [Restart Israel](#)

Notable Events

MENA: President Trump holds Situation Room meeting on July 14, vows to strike Iranian powerplants, bridges next week; risk of escalation rises

Current Situation - US President Donald Trump stated that the US will strike Iranian power plants and bridges “next week” unless Tehran returns to negotiations. Meanwhile, according to a July 14 report, US President Trump held a Situation Room meeting to discuss a “massive offensive” in Iran. On July 15, the US Central Command (CENTCOM) confirmed the completion of a seven-hour round of strikes in Iran, marking the sixth wave since July 6. Targets included missile and UAV sites, naval capabilities, and coastal defense systems.

Assessments & Forecast - This marks the fourth consecutive day of tit-for-tat exchanges between the US and Iran. While the scale and targets of US strikes have remained largely consistent in recent days, focusing on degrading Iran’s maritime attack capabilities, President Trump’s latest threats and reported Situation Room meeting signal Washington’s willingness to escalate. While these do not constitute cardinal signs of imminent military escalation, they are sufficient steps to facilitate such a scenario if deemed necessary by Washington. In the absence of a compromise from either side in the Strait of Hormuz to facilitate de-escalation, the prospects for regional escalation will continue to grow.

Source: [CENTCOM](#)

Iran: US Treasury sanctions Iran Central Bank-linked digital assets, oil shipping network on July 14; highlights multi-track pressure

Current Situation - US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent announced that the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) sanctioned multiple cryptocurrency wallets linked to Iran's Central Bank, freezing over 130 million USD in digital assets. He further announced sanctions on more than 50 individuals, entities, and vessels associated with a shipping network allegedly controlled by Iranian oil trader Mohammad Hossein Shamkhani.

Assessments & Forecast - The sanctions follow the recent [US-Iran military escalation](#) and underscore Washington's rejuvenated effort to apply economic pressure on Tehran. Targeting Iran's cryptocurrency holdings and maritime oil export infrastructure indicates Washington is expanding sanctions beyond conventional banking channels to target alternative financial networks and revenue streams. The sanctions aim to further isolate one of Iran's largest oil-smuggling networks, which the US alleged has made billions of USD through shadow-fleet operations supporting both Iranian and Russian petroleum exports. Additional sanctions targeting Iran's mainstream and shadow economic mechanisms are likely as Washington regenerates its maximum economic pressure campaign as part of the current escalation dynamic. Iran will continue trying to adapt to the sanctions, using front companies, alternative payment mechanisms, and shadow shipping networks.

Source: [US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent](#)

Israel: Knesset passes Security Service Bill, temporarily banning arrest of draft dodgers on July 14; to escalate political tensions

Current Situation - The temporary law, passed by 58 votes to 54, establishes a special arrangement freezing arrests, investigations, and enforcement proceedings against eligible ultra-Orthodox Yeshiva students who evade mandatory military service until November 30. The law also applies retroactively, terminating ongoing proceedings and suspending the execution of existing penalties. Meanwhile, the Knesset's Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee approved a bill extending mandatory military service from 32 to 36 months for final readings, citing the Israel Defense Forces' (IDF) ongoing manpower requirements.

Assessments & Forecast - The latest bill forms part of a broader series of [controversial measures](#) advanced by the coalition ahead of the [Knesset's dissolution on July 17](#). The parallel advancement of legislation extending mandatory military service while suspending enforcement against ultra-Orthodox draft evaders highlights the conflict between the IDF's manpower requirements and the coalition's political commitments to its ultra-Orthodox partners ahead of elections. The legislation is likely to intensify criticism that coalition stability is being prioritized over national security requirements, further exacerbating domestic political tensions and sustaining anti-government protests in the short term. Nevertheless, additional contentious legislation is likely to advance before the Knesset dissolves on July 17.

Source: [Knesset](#)

Lebanon & Syria: ISF announces arrest of IS Emir for Syria's southern, central provinces on July 13; indicates IS' use of Lebanon as base

Current Situation - Lebanon's Internal Security Forces (ISF) stated that it arrested a Syrian national, who served as the Islamic State's (IS) Emir for the group's so-called southern and central provinces, on June 30 in an unspecified location. The arrest was preceded by "careful monitoring and surveillance operations."

Assessments & Forecast - The development is notable given the seniority of the arrested IS member, who was allegedly responsible for overseeing IS operations in southern and central Syrian provinces and coordinating with Emirs in other provinces. His presence in Lebanon likely suggests that IS maintains cross-border facilitation networks, potentially using Lebanon as a logistical hub or safe haven for activities in Syria, where attacks have [surged in recent months](#). The ISF's ability to identify, monitor, and arrest a senior IS operative highlights the effectiveness of Lebanese intelligence efforts against IS networks. Given that Lebanese and Syrian authorities have sought to strengthen bilateral counter-terrorism cooperation over the past year, the operation was likely facilitated by coordination with Syrian intelligence agencies. Beirut and Damascus are likely to intensify such efforts in the coming months, with Lebanese authorities likely to conduct additional operations targeting IS operatives.

Source: [ISF](#)

Yemen: Giants Brigades intercept vessel carrying military equipment to Houthis in Bab al-Mandeb Strait on July 14; similar seizures likely

Current Situation - The Southern Giants Brigade stated that it intercepted and seized a boat en route to Hodeidah carrying specialized materials and equipment used in weapons manufacturing. The group did not specify the nature of the seized materials or equipment.

Assessments & Forecast - The latest incident follows a similar interception on [June 30](#), indicating that Houthi smuggling networks remain active and retain sufficient procurement and logistical capacity to sustain shipments despite maritime interdiction efforts by anti-Houthi forces. The fact that the vessel was bound for Hodeidah reinforces the port's continued role as the Houthis' principal maritime logistics hub for receiving military-related supplies and distributing them to manufacturing and storage facilities across Houthi-controlled territories. The seizure, based on "precise intelligence operations," indicates that the Southern Giants Brigade retains effective intelligence capabilities to detect and interdict Houthi weapons shipments. However, these seizures are unlikely to significantly degrade Houthi military capabilities, as the group is likely to continue relying on alternative procurement channels and repeated maritime smuggling attempts to replenish lost supplies. Consequently, PCC-

linked forces are likely to sustain such operations, rendering further such seizures likely over the coming months.

Source: [Southern Giants Brigades](#)

Other Developments

- **Iran:** On July 13, the UK government sanctioned the alleged Iran-linked Islamic Movement of Companions of the Right (IMCR) after the group claimed responsibility for seven attacks targeting Jewish and Israeli community sites and Persian-language media outlets in the UK.
- **Israel:** During the overnight hours (local time) on July 15, a grenade was reportedly thrown at a Japanika restaurant in Upper Galilee's Rosh Pina, marking the [latest incident in a series of attacks](#) targeting the restaurant chain.
- **Morocco:** According to July 13 reports, Moroccan police arrested Moroccan-French journalist Ali Lmrabet upon his arrival at Tangier airport on charges of allegedly disseminating false information harmful to constitutional institutions.
- **Palestinian Territories:** On July 13, the European Commission announced the launch of "Team Gaza Initiative," with 15 partners, to deliver 883.6 million EUR (approximately one billion USD) in support of reconstruction efforts in the Gaza Strip.
- **Tunisia:** On July 13, Tunisia's trade deficit widened to 12.6 billion dinars (TND), approximately 4.2 billion USD, in the first half of 2026, up from 9.9 billion dinars during the same period in 2025.

Notable Dates

22 JUL	Israel Holiday: Tisha B'Av
23 JUL	Egypt Holiday: Revolution Day
25 JUL	Tunisia Holiday: Republic Day
30 JUL	Morocco Holiday: Throne Day
31 JUL	MENA Travel: Anniversary of the assassination of Hamas Political Bureau Chief Ismail Haniyeh
31 JUL	Iraq (KRG) Holiday: Yazidi Peak of Summer