



Planning America's 250th highlights divide

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Iran has reaffirmed its support for Hezbollah



A woman holds an image of Iran's supreme leader, Mojtaba Khamenei, on June 4 during a rally in Tehran.

MAJID ASGARIPOUR/WEST ASIA NEWS AGENCY VIA REUTERS

Tehran says fighting in Lebanon must end

Ahmed Elimam and Jana Choukeir
REUTERS

DUBAI – Iran has reaffirmed support for its Lebanese ally Hezbollah and demanded that Israel withdraw from southern Lebanon, underscoring complications facing an interim deal to end the broader conflict between the United States and Iran.

Tehran has made a ceasefire between Israel and Hezbollah a condition for any peace deal with Washington to resolve the regional war, now in its fourth month, and restart shipping through the

Strait of Hormuz.

The latest round of fighting between Hezbollah and Israel erupted at the start of March, two days after the United States and Israel launched strikes against Iran. Hezbollah said its actions were in support of Tehran.

"This war will end only when it ends in Lebanon as well," Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi told Lebanese TV station Al Mayadeen late on June 4.

"The end of the war on Lebanon must be accompanied by the withdrawal of Israeli forces from the territories they have occupied," he said.

The comments came after Hezbollah leader Naim Qassem rejected a U.S.-brokered pact between Israel and the Lebanese government to halt the fighting in Lebanon. The deal did not provide for an Israeli withdrawal and Hezbollah had not been party to the negotiations.

Israel has kept up strikes in southern Lebanon and has said its forces would not withdraw or halt operations in the country amid increasing friction with the United States.

Hezbollah said on June 5 it had carried out two attacks on Israeli troops in south Lebanon, including near the recently captured Beaufort Castle, while Lebanese security services said Israeli airstrikes hit towns across southern Lebanon.

Fighting flares across region

Mohsen Rezaei, an adviser to Iran's supreme leader, said Hezbollah had "made great sacrifices in the recent war and it is our ally. Therefore, we support Hezbollah and remain firmly

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Senate narrowly approves \$70B for ICE

Zachary Schermele
USA TODAY

Democrats don't have much leverage in Washington these days – until they do.

A small, but significant, political window opened up briefly this week as Senate Republicans worked to pass a roughly \$70 billion funding bill for Immigration and Customs Enforcement and Border Patrol. The massive, years-long cash influx was ultimately approved on a mostly party-line vote in the early morning hours of June 5.

But it came at a cost: In order to green-light the legislation with just a simple majority, GOP lawmakers were forced to endure a litany of tough votes offered by their Democratic counterparts (and some within their own party).

In the early morning hours, all sorts of measures were put on the table – officially banning the Justice Department's so-called "anti-weaponization" fund, fully scrapping funding for the White House ballroom, bolstering housing affordability for Americans, the list went on. It was all part of a consequential, though wonky, legislative process senators refer to as "vote-a-rama."

The flurry of late-night Senate action highlighted which issues Democrats think could prove politically salient for them in the upcoming midterm elections – and where vulnerable Republicans felt a need to break from their party.

"The Republican agenda is now written in black and white: a slush fund for Trump, tax dodges for Trump, a ballroom for Trump, and a private militia for Trump," Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-New York, said in a statement. "For hard-working Americans? Nothing."

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May job gains beat analysts' expectations

Andrea Riquier and Rachel Barber
USA TODAY

U.S. employers added 172,000 jobs in May, and totals from previous months were revised upward, the Labor Department said June 5 – additional confirmation of an economy that analysts say is on surprisingly firm footing.

Job gains were concentrated in leisure and hospitality, local government and health care. Average hourly earnings were up 0.3%, an acceleration from April.

The unemployment rate held steady at 4.3%.

The report trounced analysts' expectations of an 85,000 gain in jobs in May.

"Let's get ready to rumble is what the shocking jobs numbers are telling us about the economy," said Christopher Rupkey, chief economist of FWDBONDS LLC, in a note just after the release. "It's classic supply and demand. There is continuing demand for business services so companies hire more workers to supply what consumers and other businesses demand."



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RICHARD BURKHART/SAVANNAH MORNING NEWS FILE

The report bumps up the chances for what is now widely expected to be an interest rate hike, rather than a cut, by the Federal Reserve at some point in 2026, said Liz Ann

Sonders, chief investment strategist at the Schwab Center for Financial Research.

"I think a day like today shows that any of these individual numbers can move those expectations," Sonders said.

Investors, economists, financial analysts and all kinds of policymakers consider the Labor Department's monthly first-Friday jobs report one of the keys for understanding the U.S. economy.

"It helps shape the outlook for wages, consumer confidence and the Federal Reserve's next steps," ConnectOne Bank Founder and CEO Frank Sorrentino said in an email to USA TODAY before the release of the report.

Data released before the June 5 report suggested the job market was finding its footing.

"The labor market has shown signs of cooling in some areas, but from what we see on Main Street, many businesses are still operating, hiring selectively, investing cautiously and adapting to higher costs," Sorrentino

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