



# MIDDLE EAST DAILY BULLETIN

## GÜNLÜK ORTADOĐU BÜLTENİ

**Domestic Policy in the Middle East Countries**

Bölge Ülkelerinde İç Siyaset

**The Restructuring Procees of Iraq**

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Batı'yla İliőkiler

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**03 MARCH 2017**

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## 1. IRAQ

- **UN: 4,000 civilians flee Mosul each day amid fighting**

Intense battles between Iraqi security forces and ISIL fighters in Mosul are causing increasing numbers of displaced people, with 4,000 civilians fleeing the city each day, according to the United Nations.

More details:

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/03/4000-civilians-flee-mosul-day-fighting-170302144254179.html>

- **Iranian Kurdish groups urge Iraqi parliament to reject call for their expulsion**

Iran's Kurdish opposition groups based in the Kurdistan Region have come together to denounce an Iraqi parliamentary motion that calls for their expulsion from Iraq.

More details:

<http://www.rudaw.net/english/kurdistan/020320171>

- **The US-led coalition Unable to confirm reports of Daesh Chemical Attack in Mosul**

The US-led coalition has no information to confirm a chemical attack reportedly carried by the Daesh terror group in Iraq's western Mosul on Wednesday, a spokesperson of the Operation Inherent Resolve told Sputnik.

More details:

<https://sputniknews.com/middleeast/201703021051206597-coalition-daesh-chemical-attack-mosul/>

- **Security forces kill IS official of Mosques Diwan west of Mosul**

A local source informed that the so-called Islamic State's official of the Diwan of mosques in Nineveh Province was killed during clashes, west of Mosul, Alsumaria News reported on Thursday.

More details:

<http://www.iraqinews.com/iraq-war/security-forces-kill-official-mosques-diwan-west-mosul/>

- **China: Fears of terrorism as Uighur IS fighters vow blood will 'flow in rivers**

China is worried that Uighurs, a mostly Muslim people from western China's Xinjiang region, have gone to Syria and Iraq to fight for militant groups there, having travelled illegally via Southeast Asia and Turkey.

More details:

<https://asiancorrespondent.com/2017/03/china-fears-terrorism-uighur-fighters-vow-blood-will-flow-rivers/#Duvoe4EsXFY90Yjc.97>

- **Iraqis Stream Out of Mosul as Battle against ISIS Intensifies**

Thousands of Iraqis are fleeing the shrinking ISIS stronghold in the west of Mosul.

More details:

<http://www.nbcnews.com/slideshow/displaced-iraqis-flee-mosul-n728161>

- **Kurds commemorate legendary leader Mustafa Barzani**

On Thursday Kurds at home and in diaspora commemorated the 38th anniversary of Kurdish liberation movement leader, Mullah Mustafa Barzani.

More details:

<http://www.kurdistan24.net/en/news/d9000239-c205-4f34-9920-66d9a76280cc/Kurds-commemorate-legendary-leader-Mustafa-Barzani->

- **Islamic State Hid Training Camp in Rail Tunnel Near Mosul**

Islamic State built an obstacle course in an old railway tunnel where raw recruits crawled under barbed wire and scaled walls to begin their reshaping into seasoned fighters, according to Iraqi military officials who uncovered it.

More details:

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/islamic-state-hid-training-camp-in-rail-tunnel-near-mosul-1488492937>

- **Italian FM Dismisses visa head at Erbil Consulate after 'Irregularities'**

The person in charge of the visa department at the Italian consulate in Erbil has been dismissed and an inspection commissioned by Italy's Foreign Ministry has "revealed several irregularities" regarding verifying the regularity of visa issuing procedures, the ministry stated. An Italian newspaper reported of applicants paying up to 10,000 euros for visas.

More details:

<http://www.iraqdailyjournal.com/story-z14886798>

- **President Barzani received new Saudi Consul General in Erbil**

Kurdish President Masoud Barzani received the new Consul General of Saudi Arabia to Erbil on Thursday, highlighting the strengthening relations between the two sides.

More details:

<http://www.rudaw.net/english/kurdistan/020320176>

- **Peshmerga official: We will not withdraw from areas we liberated in Mosul**

The Chief of Staff of the Kurdish Peshmerga forces, Lieutenant General Jamal Mohamed, announced on Thursday, that the Peshmerga forces will not withdraw from the areas that they liberated from the Islamic State, before the start of the battle to liberate Mosul.

More details:

<http://www.iraqnews.com/iraq-war/peshmerga-official-will-not-withdraw-areas-liberated-mosul/>

- **Pentagon makes awkward attempts to blame Russia amid failed Middle East policy**

The Pentagon is attempting to tarnish Russia's political image because it is irritated by Moscow's efforts in Syria to forge an anti-terrorist military alliance with Turkey and Iraq in order to tackle Daesh, according to political analyst Alexander Khrolenko of the International Information Agency Rossiya Segodnya.

More details:

<https://sputniknews.com/world/201703031051220527-russia-united-states-syria-allegations/>

- **Fleeing the horrors of war**

The gunshot rang out as civilians tried to escape the west of Mosul, where Iraqi forces are battling jihadists, killing a father as he fled with his family.

More details:

<http://www.timeslive.co.za/thetimes/2017/03/03/Fleeing-the-horrors-of-war>

- **ISIS fighters attempt to blend in with surging level of refugees leaving Mosul**

ISIS terrorists desperate to escape the city of Mosul have been inserting themselves with the skyrocketing number of refugees looking to flee the city.

More details:

<http://www.theblaze.com/news/2017/03/02/isis-fighters-attempt-to-blend-in-with-surging-level-of-refugees-leaving-mosul/>

- **Compassion and adrenaline drive volunteer medics at Mosul's front lines**

Veterans of the U.S. and foreign militaries are drawn to the front lines here in the fight for Iraq's second-largest city. Besides military experience, they bring medical skills, part of a toolkit they use to save the lives of Mosul's "most vulnerable."

More details:

<https://www.stripes.com/news/compassion-and-adrenaline-drive-volunteer-medics-at-mosul-s-front-lines-1.456865#.WLkjVNSLRko>

- **PUK forces storm oil facility to protest Baghdad's negligence of Kirkuk**

Crude flows from Iraq's northern Kirkuk fields resumed on Thursday after few hours of disruption, when the Heza Rashaka, also known as Task Force Black, took over the facility of the Iraqi North Oil Company (NOC) in Kirkuk to protest Baghdad's oil policy.

More details:

<http://aranews.net/2017/03/puk-forces-storm-oil-facility-protest-baghdads-negligence-kirkuk/>

- **Why Iraq's Shiites are wary of Sadr's 'Initial Solutions'**

Shiite cleric Muqtada al-Sadr's proposal for national reconciliation in the post-Islamic State era has attracted support from Sunnis, but Shiites not so much.

More details:

<http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2017/02/iraq-shiite-sunni-national-reconciliation.html>

- **EU signs deal with Iraq to combat 'radicalism'**

The Iraqi government on Thursday signed a \$12-million deal with the European Union ostensibly aimed at combating "radicalism". Following a signing ceremony, Iraqi Planning Minister Salman al-Jameeli told reporters that the agreement was part of the EU's ongoing support for war-battered Iraq.

More details:

<http://aa.com.tr/en/europe/eu-signs-deal-with-iraq-to-combat-radicalism-/762828>

## 2. SYRIA

- **Palmyra: Russia-backed Syria army retakes ancient city**

The Syrian army said it has recaptured the ancient city of Palmyra from ISIL for the second time in a year with help from allied forces and Russian warplanes. The Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant group seized Palmyra in a surprise advance in December after having been driven out eight months before.

More details:

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/03/palmyra-russia-backed-syria-army-retakes-ancient-city-170303050427702.html>

- **Ankara Hints to Washington: Cooperation with Moscow in Raqqa**

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said his country was ready to join hands with Russia in its fight against ISIS in Syria, a position that experts consider a proposal from Ankara to assist in the expected military operation in Raqqa, if Moscow wants to.

More details:

<http://english.aawsat.com/2017/03/article55368550/ankara-hints-washington-cooperation-moscow-raqqa>

- **Syria's Kurdish-led administration sees end to economic 'siege'**

The Kurdish-led administration in northeastern Syria says a new land corridor to the government-controlled west marks an economic breakthrough for their autonomous region that has been under "siege" by hostile parties.

More details:

[http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-northeast-idUSKBN16A0K2?feedType=RSS&feedName=worldNews&utm\\_source=feedburner&utm\\_medium=feed&utm\\_campaign=Feed%3A+Reuters%2FworldNews+%28Reuters+World+News%29&&rpc=401](http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-northeast-idUSKBN16A0K2?feedType=RSS&feedName=worldNews&utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+Reuters%2FworldNews+%28Reuters+World+News%29&&rpc=401)

- **Syrian government accuses opposition of holding Geneva peace talks 'hostage'**

Syria has accused the main opposition of taking UN-backed peace talks 'hostage' over its refusal to include terrorism on the agenda, warning it would be responsible if the sputtering negotiations fail.

More details:

[http://www.maltatoday.com.mt/news/world/74971/syrian\\_government\\_accuses\\_opposition\\_holdin\\_g\\_geneva\\_peace\\_talks\\_hostage#.WLkjoW\\_yiU](http://www.maltatoday.com.mt/news/world/74971/syrian_government_accuses_opposition_holdin_g_geneva_peace_talks_hostage#.WLkjoW_yiU)

- **Barzani-loyal Rojava Peshmerga forces deployed to Syrian Kurdistan border**

Syrian Rojava Peshmerga forces trained by Iraqi Kurdistan Democratic Party KDP's Zeravani forces have deployed a new regiment to the Iraqi Kurdistan-Syrian Kurdistan border local media reported.

More details:

<http://ekurd.net/barzani-rojava-peshmerga-syrian-2017-03-03>

- **Al-Qaida confirms deputy leader killed in US strike in Syria**

A U.S. airstrike in Syria earlier this week killed the deputy leader of al-Qaida, known as Abu al-Khayr al-Masri, the group confirmed on Thursday. The death brings a significant blow to the terror network and points to the central role Syria has taken in its operations.

More details:

<http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/al-qaida-confirms-deputy-leader-killed-us-strike-45861587>

- **Syria conflict: Manbij militia to hand villages to army**

A US-allied Syrian militia has said it will hand over villages west of the town of Manbij to the army in order to stop Turkish-backed rebels taking them.

More details:

<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-39140880>

- **Nearly 900 Azerbaijanis joined terrorist organizations**

Nearly 900 Azerbaijani nationals joined terrorist organizations in Syria, Iraq and other countries as of today, said Head of the Azerbaijan's State Security Service Lieutenant-General Madat Guliyev.

More details:

<http://en.trend.az/azerbaijan/politics/2727936.html>

- **Syrian Arrested On War Crimes Charges**

Germany on Thursday arrested 2 Syrian men accused of being members of the al-Nusra terror organization. One of them is accused of war crimes for allegedly participating in the killing of 36 Syrian government employees.

More details:

<https://global.handelsblatt.com/politics/syrian-arrested-over-war-crimes-charges-717455>

- **Concrete evidence: French cement giant admits Syria 'unacceptable practices'**

French cement maker LafargeHolcim admitted it had resorted to "unacceptable practices" to continue operations at one of its now-closed factories in Syria, including paying money to armed groups and sanctioned parties for protection.

More details:

<https://www.alaraby.co.uk/english/news/2017/3/2/concrete-evidence-french-cement-giant-admits-syria-unacceptable-practices>

### 3. IRAN

- **Danish amb. summoned over attempt to attack embassy**

Foreign Ministry spokesperson has said the ministry has summoned Danish ambassador in relation to opposition encroachment of Iran's embassy in Copenhagen

More Details:

<http://en.mehrnews.com/news/123947/Danish-amb-summoned-over-attempt-to-attack-embassy>

- **Egyptian-Iranian détente a boon for the region and beyond**

With the resurgence of "firstness" (i.e. America First), with all its ominous implications of narrow nationalism, there is a profound global need for a "dialogue of civilizations." This call is not new, having originally been proposed by former reformist Iranian president Mohammad Khatami and most recently echoed by the Grand Imam of Cairo's Al-Azhar in a speech before the German Bundestag in 2016.

More Details:

<http://www.tehrantimes.com/news/411567/Egyptian-Iranian-d%C3%A9tente-a-boon-for-the-region-and-beyond>

- **Iran to attend IORA confab in Indonesia**

Iran to attend the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) Conference to held in Jakarta, Indonesia, from March 5-7.

More Details:

<http://www.irna.ir/en/News/82450333/>

- **Iran, EU hold joint seminar on nuclear co-op**

The EU and Iran held a high-level seminar on nuclear cooperation in Brussels on Feb. 28-March 1. The seminar named “International Nuclear Cooperation: Expectations and Responsibilities” was the result of a joint initiative of the European Commissioner for Energy and Climate Action Miguel Arias Cañete and Iranian Vice-President Ali Akbar Salehi, the European Commission said on its official website.

More Details:

<http://en.trend.az/iran/politics/2727577.html>

- **Some Progress in Iran-Saudi Hajj Talks: Official**

An Iranian official said negotiations with Saudi Arabia on resumption of Hajj pilgrimages by Iranians have made some progress.

More Details:

<https://www.tasnimnews.com/en/news/2017/03/02/1344012/some-progress-in-iran-saudi-hajj-talks-official>

- **Iran Prepares for ‘Weapons Shopping Spree’ After U.N. Resolution Expires**

Bloomberg Politics reported another towering achievement of Obama foreign policy on Wednesday, as the world’s leading state sponsor of terrorism Iran counts its money from the nuclear deal windfall and prepares for a weapons “shopping spree.”

More Details:

<http://www.breitbart.com/national-security/2017/03/02/iran-gets-ready-weapons-shopping-spree-u-n-resolution-expires/>

- **Iranian senior advisor, Indian vice president discuss cultural ties**

Supreme Leader's top Advisor and Head of Academy of Persian Language and Literature Gholamali Haddad Adel and Indian Vice President Mohammad Hamid Ansari discussed expansion of cultural cooperation between the two countries in a meeting on Thursday.

More Details:

<http://www.irna.ir/en/News/82450213/>

- **Russia Building Relations with Iran on Basis of National Interestsü**

The Russian Foreign Ministry said Moscow was building relations with Tehran on the basis of its own interests.

More Details:

<https://sputniknews.com/politics/201703021051201511-russia-iran-relations/>

- **Iran: IOCs that studied oil fields more likely to win tenders**

Iran says the foreign companies that have studied the country's oil and gas reserves have more chance to win development tenders.

More Details:

<http://en.trend.az/iran/business/2727658.html>

- **Iran regaining OPEC's market share**

The recent reports indicate that the Islamic Republic of Iran has already been able to escalate its oil exports to levels that existed before sanctions were imposed on the country in 2011. Iran's exports of oil stood at 2.35 million bpd before the sanctions were imposed against the country in 2011.

More Details:

<http://www.payvand.com/news/17/mar/1011.html>

## 4. ISRAEL – PALESTINE

- **Damning Gaza report provokes calls for Netanyahu resignation**

A report severely criticising Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu's leadership in the 2014 Gaza war may weaken the self-styled "Mr Security", analysts say.

More details:

<http://www.albawaba.com/news/damning-gaza-report-provokes-calls-netanyahu-resignation-944956>

- **Palestinians more pessimistic about peace with Israel under Trump**

The majority of Palestinians have become increasingly pessimistic at the prospect of reaching a peace deal with Israel since the election of US President Donald Trump, a poll published on Thursday indicated.

More details:

<http://www.timesofisrael.com/palestinians-more-pessimistic-about-peace-with-israel-under-trump-poll/>

- **President Edgar Lungu woos Israeli Investors**

President Lungu says Zambia is in a hurry to make up for time and development opportunities lost when the country's ties with Israel were at an ebb.

More details:

<https://www.lusakatimes.com/2017/03/03/president-edgar-lungu-woos-israeli-investors/>

- **UN Coordinator for Middle East Condemns Rocket Firing From Gaza Toward Israel**

UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East peace process Nikolay Mladenov condemned in a Thursday statement the recent firing of a rocket from Gaza toward Israel.

More details:

<https://sputniknews.com/middleeast/201703031051214843-un-gaza-strike-condemnation/>

- **Majority of Canadians support Israel boycott, sanctions**

A majority of Canadians believes that boycotting Israel is reasonable if the Israeli government continues to violate international law, a new public opinion poll has found.

More details:

<https://www.alaraby.co.uk/english/indepth/2017/3/3/majority-of-canadians-support-israel-boycott-sanctions>

- **Israeli court delays lenient jail term for soldier convicted of murder**

An Israeli military court has postponed the imprisonment of an Israeli soldier, who is given a lenient prison term of 18 months for shooting dead a wounded Palestinian man in the occupied West Bank last year.

More details:

<http://www.presstv.com/Detail/2017/03/03/512787/Palestine-Israeli-soldier-kill-court-Elor-Azaria>

- **Senator Bernie Sanders to J Street: We Need to End the 50-year-long Israeli Occupation**

US Senator Bernie Sanders said, on Monday, that Israeli military occupation runs against both American and Israeli values, and called for its end.

More details:

<http://imemc.org/article/u-s-senator-bernie-sanders-to-j-street-we-need-to-end-the-50-year-long-israeli-occupation/>

- **' Hamas tunnels are not a strategic threat'**

MK Motti Yogevev says Hamas tunnels do not threaten Israel's existence, constitute tactical, rather than strategic threat.

More details:

<http://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx/226024>

- **Israeli court extends TIKA employee's detention time**

An Israeli court on Thursday extended the detention period of a Palestinian employee of Turkish aid agency TIKA, who was arrested last month as he was attempting to cross the Erez border crossing between Israel and the Gaza Strip.

More details:

<http://aa.com.tr/en/middle-east/israeli-court-extends-tika-employees-detention-time/762952>

- **Abbas to visit Russia in May**

Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas will reportedly visit Moscow in May to discuss the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, Palestinian ambassador to Russia Abd al-Hafith Nawfal said on Wednesday.

More details:

<http://www.maannews.com/Content.aspx?ID=775752>

## 5. JORDAN and LEBANON

- **Jordan rejects reported Israeli court ruling in favor of Jewish prayer at Al-Aqsa**

The Jordanian government rejected on Thursday a recent Israeli magistrate court decision reportedly ruling that Jews should be permitted to pray at the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound -- known to Jews as the Temple Mount -- according to a Jordanian government source.

More details:

<http://www.maannews.com/Content.aspx?ID=775756>

- **Lebanon's refugee policy reform is too little, too late**

Six years into the Syrian civil war, there appears to be a glimmer of hope for the 1.5 million refugees residing in neighboring Lebanon, who account for roughly 25% of the population.

More details:

<https://www.opendemocracy.net/kareem-chehayeb/lebanon-s-refugee-policy-reform-is-too-little-too-late>

- **Hezbollah, Russia and the U.S. help Syria retake Palmyra**

Syrian government forces recaptured the historic city of Palmyra from the Islamic State on Thursday, aided by Lebanon's Hezbollah, the Russian military and, indirectly, U.S. airstrikes.

More details:

[https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/syrian-army-retakes-the-ancient-city-of-palmyra-from-the-islamic-state/2017/03/02/fe770c78-ff63-11e6-9b78-824ccab94435\\_story.html?utm\\_term=.6c5bf610997b](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/syrian-army-retakes-the-ancient-city-of-palmyra-from-the-islamic-state/2017/03/02/fe770c78-ff63-11e6-9b78-824ccab94435_story.html?utm_term=.6c5bf610997b)

- **France to Provide Lebanon with Military Aid**

French Defense Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian is expected to visit Beirut in the next days, amid reports that France will provide Lebanon with military assistance after Saudi Arabia halted its grant last year, the pan-Arab al-Hayat daily reported on Friday.

More details:

<http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/226338-report-france-to-provide-lebanon-with-military-aid>

- **Lebanon and EU hold highlevel meeting on counterterrorism**

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants and the European Union held today a high-level meeting on counter-terrorism.

More details:

<http://nna-leb.gov.lb/en/show-news/76043/Lebanon-and-EU-hold-highlevel-meeting-on-counterterrorism>

- **Armenian Ambassador to Vatican visits Lebanon**

Armenian Ambassador to Vatican Mikayel Minasyan visited the Catholicosate of the Great House of Cilicia in Lebanon Thursday.

More details:

<https://news.am/eng/news/376473.html>

- **Palestinian leadership plans to 'force out' wanted Lebanese out of Ain al-Hilweh**

Palestinian leaders in Lebanon demanded that all wanted men who are not Palestinian leave Ain al-Hilweh Palestinian refugee camp, according to a statement released on Thursday.

More details:

<http://www.maannews.com/Content.aspx?ID=775749>

- **Is the FPM, LF honeymoon over?**

Free Patriotic Movement criticized the Lebanese Forces over its latest proposal for privatizing the electricity sector during the cabinet meeting that was supposed to discuss the budget at the Grand Serail.

More details:

<http://yalibnan.com/2017/03/02/is-the-fpm-lf-honeymoon-over/>

- **Digital economy holds great potential for refugees, Jordanians alike, expert says**

Technology could help address some of the education and skills challenges caused by the Syrian crisis, participants at the No Lost Generation (NLG) Ed-Tech Summit 2017 have suggested.

More details:

<http://www.jordantimes.com/news/local/digital-economy-holds-great-potential-refugees-jordanians-alike-expert-says>

- **Lebanon's minister sounds warning over 'total collapse' of industrial and trading sectors**

Lebanon's Industry Minister Hussein Hajj Hasan Tuesday warned of a total collapse of the industrial and trading sectors in Lebanon.

More details:

<http://www.albawaba.com/business/lebanons-minister-sounds-warning-over-total-collapse-industrial-and-trading-sectors-944642>

## 6. ARABIAN PENINSULA AND THE GULF OF BASRA

- **Fond farewell for outgoing Turkish ambassador**

At a farewell gathering befitting his eventful tenure in Qatar as the ambassador of Turkey, Ahmet Demirok lauded the visionary leadership of the State of Qatar and Qatar's prime role in working towards ushering in a peaceful solution in the region.

More Details

<http://www.gulf-times.com/story/534969/Fond-farewell-for-outgoing-Turkish-ambassador>

- **Saudi Arabia's King Salman urges for unity to confront challenges of terrorism**

King Salman in a speech here on Thursday urged unity against terrorism and threats to internal security. "The challenges facing the Islamic nation, particularly, and the world generally, topped by the phenomenon of extremism and terrorism, the clash of cultures, non-respect for sovereignty of countries, and interference in their internal affairs, necessitate that we stand united in confronting these challenges and coordinate stances and efforts to serve our common interests and international peace and security," the king was quoted as saying by the SPA.

More Detail

<http://www.arabnews.com/node/1062511/saudi-arabia>

- **King Salman, Indonesian Islamic figures discuss peace**

Visiting Saudi King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud and a number of Indonesian Muslim figures together with President Joko Widodo have discussed peace-building efforts. "Saudi Arabia and Indonesia are bound by the Islamic faith and the king appealed for the upholding of tolerance, prevention of

extremism and terrorism and building solidarity," Indonesian Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi said here, Thursday.

More Details

<http://www.antaranews.com/en/news/109719/king-salman-indonesian-islamic-figures-discuss-peace>

- **Saudi king calls for moderate Islam**

For decades Wahhabism, the strict strain of Islam that promotes a literal interpretation of the Quran, has been Saudi Arabia's predominant faith, and since the 1970s the oil-rich kingdom has been generous in sending funds to other Muslim countries to promote this conservative version of Islam.

More Details

<http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2017/03/03/saudi-king-calls-for-moderate-islam.html>

- **Aircraft launch attacks on suspected al Qaeda targets in Yemen – witnesses**

Military helicopters and drones launched a series of attacks on suspected al Qaeda targets in southern Yemen early on Friday, witnesses said. The unidentified aircraft, believed to be American, also deployed troops on the ground in the al-Saeed area in Shabwa province and engaged suspected al Qaeda militants in a battle that lasted nearly half an hour.

More Details

[http://www.reuters.com/article/us-yemen-security-idUSKBN16A0K0?feedType=RSS&feedName=worldNews&utm\\_source=feedburner&utm\\_medium=feed&utm\\_campaign=Feed%3A+Reuters%2FworldNews+%28Reuters+World+News%29&&rpc=401](http://www.reuters.com/article/us-yemen-security-idUSKBN16A0K0?feedType=RSS&feedName=worldNews&utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+Reuters%2FworldNews+%28Reuters+World+News%29&&rpc=401)

- **Horror and uncertainty are part of life in Yemen. We must act to prevent famine**

I have just returned from a heartbreaking visit to Yemen, the land of my birth, and one of the four regions – along with Somalia, South Sudan and northern Nigeria – declared as being at imminent risk of famine.

More Details

<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2017/mar/03/yemen-horror-uncertainty-act-prevent-famine-saleh-saeed-disasters-emergency-committee>

- **Bahrain, Turkey to expand bilateral trade**

The Sixth Bahrain-Turkish Joint Committee meeting held here yesterday has decided to strengthen economic co-operation and bilateral trade by increasing joint investments in private sector.

More Details

<http://www.newsofbahrain.com/viewNews.php?ppId=30941&TYPE=Posts&pid=21&MNU=2&SUB=>

- **Britain won't back UN statement condemning Bahrain's human rights abuses**

The UK has been accused of buttressing the human rights abusing regime of Bahrain by not endorsing the critical view of the Gulf theocracy taken by the UN. In response to a planned, Swiss-led statement by the UN warning that the island kingdom is on the brink of a human rights crisis, with political prisoners being tortured with cigarettes, electric shocks and red-hot brands, the UK Mission to the UN has chosen instead to focus on the country's "progress."

More Details

<https://www.rt.com/uk/379187-un-bahrain-human-rights/>

- **Abu Dhabi Crown Prince attends Union Fortress live military demonstration**

His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces, today attended the Hosn Al-Ittihad (Union Fortress), a public live military demonstration involving all branches of the UAE Armed Forces, held at Abu Dhabi's Corniche.

More Details

<http://www.emirates247.com/news/government/abu-dhabi-crown-prince-attends-union-fortress-live-military-demonstration-2017-03-03-1.649043>

- **Oman gains breathing space with jumbo \$5bn bond sale**

Oman's government has given itself breathing space from the pressure of financing a large budget deficit by selling \$5 billion of international bonds, almost completing its entire foreign borrowing plan for 2017 in a single issue. Wednesday's bond sale, in tranches of five, 10 and 30 years, was about double the size that most investors had expected and a huge amount for a country which returned to the international bond market in 2016 after an absence of two decades.

More Details

<http://www.arabianbusiness.com/oman-gains-breathing-space-with-jumbo-5bn-bond-sale-665487.html>

## 7. EGYPT

- **Egypt Appeals Court Finds Mubarak not Guilty over Protester Deaths**

There was euphoria among a handful of Hosni Mubarak's supporters in a Cairo court on Thursday, as Egypt's former president was definitively cleared of involvement in the killing of protesters during the uprising that ended his rule. The country's top appeals court held a final retrial after a series of challenges.

More Details

[http://www.euronews.com/2017/03/03/egypt-appeals-court-finds-mubarak-not-guilty-over-protester-deaths?utm\\_source=feedburner&utm\\_medium=feed&utm\\_campaign=Feed%3A+euronews%2Fen%2Fnews+%28euronews+-+news+-+en%29](http://www.euronews.com/2017/03/03/egypt-appeals-court-finds-mubarak-not-guilty-over-protester-deaths?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+euronews%2Fen%2Fnews+%28euronews+-+news+-+en%29)

- **Siemens celebrates Egypt megaproject milestone**

German Chancellor Angela Merkel and Egyptian President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi symbolically inaugurated the first phase of Siemens' megaproject in Egypt yesterday (March 2).

More Details

[http://www.tradearabia.com/news/OGN\\_321478.html](http://www.tradearabia.com/news/OGN_321478.html)

- **Egypt's Sisi vows to stand by Syrians against terrorists**

Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi says his country supports a "united Syria" and a political resolution to the foreign-sponsored militancy that has ravaged the Arab country for six years and killed thousands of people.

More Details

<http://www.presstv.com/Detail/2017/03/03/512773/Egypt-Sisi-Syria-political-solution>

- **White House pushing back against Mattis appointment**

Secretary of Defense Jim Mattis wants to tap the former U.S. ambassador to Egypt, Anne Patterson, as his undersecretary of defense for policy, but the Pentagon chief is running into resistance from White House officials, according to multiple sources familiar with the situation.

More Details

<http://www.politico.com/story/2017/03/jim-mattis-appointment-white-house-pushback-anne-patterson-235633>

- **Egypt's high court clears ex-President Mubarak in protesters' deaths**

An Egyptian court on Thursday acquitted former President Hosni Mubarak of charges he played a role in the killing of protesters during an uprising in 2011, clearing the way for his release from prison. In Cairo, the Court of Cassation rejected demands by victims' lawyers to reopen civil suits. The final verdict means Mubarak, 88, can be released from Maadi Military Hospital.

More Details

[http://www.upi.com/Top\\_News/World-News/2017/03/02/Egypt-high-court-clears-ex-President-Mubarak-in-protesters-deaths/3321488508185/?utm\\_source=sec&utm\\_campaign=sl&utm\\_medium=1](http://www.upi.com/Top_News/World-News/2017/03/02/Egypt-high-court-clears-ex-President-Mubarak-in-protesters-deaths/3321488508185/?utm_source=sec&utm_campaign=sl&utm_medium=1)

- **Stage set for Merkel**

Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah Al-Sisi said on Thursday that Egypt had not set up camps for refugees. "We have about five million refugees who are living here and who go around and about just like Egyptians," Al-Sisi said in a joint press conference in Cairo with visiting German Chancellor Angela Merkel.

More Details

<http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/News/19786.aspx>

- **Merkel in Egypt to reduce migrant flows**

German Chancellor Angela Merkel held talks Thursday with Egyptian President Abdel Fattah Al Sisi on stemming illegal migration to her country, during a two-day trip that will also include Tunisia.

More Details

<http://jordantimes.com/news/region/merkel-egypt-reduce-migrant-flows>

- **Egyptian Court Clears Way for Hosni Mubarak's Release**

Egypt's top appeals court cleared former President Hosni Mubarak of any responsibility for the killing of hundreds of people during the 2011 protests that ended his 30-year rule, sweeping away the final legal hurdle to Mr. Mubarak's release from detention.

More Details

<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/03/02/world/middleeast/hosni-mubarak-release-egypt-court.html>

- **Gradual tax plan lifts Egypt; ex-dividend shares hit Dubai**

Egypt's stock market rose sharply yesterday after the finance minister said he would propose only a gradual introduction of a stamp duty on transactions, while stocks going ex-dividend dragged down Dubai. The Egyptian index climbed 2.6% as blue chip Global Telecom jumped 7.6%.

More Details

<http://www.gulf-times.com/story/534942/Gradual-tax-plan-lifts-Egypt-ex-dividend-shares-hi>

- **Foreign minister champions human rights progress at UN rights council meeting**

Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry promoted Egypt's alleged human rights progress during a meeting of the United Nations Human Rights Council in Geneva. This followed an earlier meeting with representatives of American Jewish organizations at the Egyptian Embassy in Washington DC focusing on regional conflicts and Egypt-US relations.

More Details

<http://www.madamasr.com/en/2017/03/02/news/u/foreign-minister-champions-human-rights-progress-at-un-rights-council-meeting/>

## 8. NORTH AFRICA

- **Algeria-Portugal: Joint economic cooperation working group meets in Portugal**

Minister of Industry and Mines Abdessalem Bouchouareb arrived Thursday in Portugal to co-chair the 5th meeting of the joint working group on economic cooperation with his Portuguese counterpart Manuel Caldeira Cabral, announced the Ministry in a communiqué.

More Details:

<http://en.aps.dz/economy/17085-algeria-portugal-joint-economic-cooperation-working-group-meets-in-portugal>

- **War weapons discovered in southern Algeria**

Algerian counterterrorism troops deployed in remote desert areas of the country discovered large loads of war weapons, Defense Ministry said on Thursday in a statement.

More Details:

[http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-03/02/c\\_136097491.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-03/02/c_136097491.htm)

- **IMF mission to hold consultations on 7-20 March in Algiers**

An International Monetary Fund (IMF) mission will be on a visit to Algeria between 7 and 20 March to hold yearly consultations on the Algerian economic, the head of IMF mission to Algeria Jean François Dauphin told APS Thursday.

More Details:

<http://en.aps.dz/economy/17091-imf-mission-to-hold-consultations-on-7-20-march-in-algiers>

- **Next neighbouring countries' conference to be held in Algiers before end of this month**

Algiers will host a fresh meeting of Libya's six neighbours by the end of March, Algeria's Minister of Maghreb Affairs, African Union and Arab League Affairs, Abdelkader Messahel, has told a local Algerian local radio station.

More Details:

<https://www.libyaherald.com/2017/03/02/next-neighbouring-countries-conference-to-be-held-in-algiers-before-end-of-this-month/>

- **Moroccan King Calls Buhari, Seeks to Join ECOWAS**

King Mohammed VI of Morocco on Wednesday had a telephone conversation with President Muhammadu Buhari in London, where the Nigerian president is on vacation.

More Details:

<https://www.thisdaylive.com/index.php/2017/03/03/moroccan-king-calls-buhari-seeks-to-join-ecowas/>

- **Some significant conversations in Tunisia**

Two years after deadly shootings wreaked havoc in Tunisia and crippled its tourism, the visit of an Indian minister is seen by Western diplomats as a serious boost to the fledgling economy of the coastal African nation.

More Details:

<http://blogs.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/newshound-ales/some-significant-conversations-in-tunisia/>

- **Upstaging jihad in Tunisia's impoverished mountains**

A rustic theater where performers wear masks carved from cactus aims to win over young Tunisians in a long neglected mountain district that has become a cradle of jihadism.

More Details:

<http://www.timesofisrael.com/upstaging-jihad-in-tunisia-impoverished-mountains/>

- **Japan helps fund food for Libya's new poor**

Japan has provided funding to the UN World Food Programme (WFP) to help feed Libya's new poor – those now unable to afford sufficient food either because of having had to flee their homes, or income having dried up, jobs gone or rising prices finally putting staple goods beyond their means.

More Details:

<https://www.libyaherald.com/2017/03/02/japan-helps-fund-food-for-libyas-new-poor/>

- **Russia asserts growing ambitions in Middle East with Libya talks**

Russia on Thursday asserted its growing ambitions in the Middle East by holding talks in Moscow with Fayez Al Sarraj, head of Libya's UN-backed Government of National Accord.

More Details:

<http://www.thenational.ae/world/europe/russia-asserts-growing-ambitions-in-middle-east-with-libya-talks>

## 9. AFGHANISTAN – PAKISTAN

- **Afghan forces kill 5 militants, recapture several villages in western Badghis province**

Afghan security forces after killing five Taliban rebels and destroying their hideouts regained the control of several villages in Kandalan valley outside provincial capital Qala-e-Naw on Thursday, provincial police Chief Abdul Rauf Taj said Friday.

More Details:

[http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-03/03/c\\_136099359.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-03/03/c_136099359.htm)

- **Afghan Foreign Minister Rules Out Military Solution for Situation in Country**

The current situation in Afghanistan cannot be resolved by military means, Afghan Foreign Minister Salahuddin Rabbani told Sputnik on Friday, adding that Kabul welcomed all possible efforts to promote the peace process.

More Details:

<https://sputniknews.com/asia/201703031051222588-afghanistan-military-solution/>

- **Forced from 'home'**

A wander through the narrow, unpaved streets of this Turkmen Afghan refugee camp feels like walking through a ghost town. The dirt lanes are lined with crumbling mud-and-stone homes, abandoned by refugees who chose, under a campaign of increasing pressure from Pakistani authorities, to repatriate to their native Afghanistan.

More Details:

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1318100/forced-from-home>

- **Rabbani for deep political, trade ties with Cuba**

Pakistan and Cuba have agreed to maintain upward trajectory in bilateral relations witnessed in the recent past.

More Details:

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/189907-Rabbani-for-deep-political-trade-ties-with-Cuba>

- **Afghanistan will be removed from banking gray list in a month**

Da Afghanistan Bank (DAB), Afghanistan's national bank, has announced that Afghanistan will be taken off the gray list of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) in a month after meeting all the requirements.

More Details:

<http://wadsam.com/afghan-business-news/afghanistan-will-removed-banking-gray-list-month-232/>

- **Govt not considering any option to extradite Kulbhushan Jadhav, says Aziz**

Adviser to the Prime Minister on Foreign Affairs Sartaj Aziz on Friday briefed the Senate that the government was not considering any option to extradite Indian spy Kulbhushan Jadhav, and said an FIR had been registered against the alleged Indian agent.

More Details:

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1318160/govt-not-considering-any-option-to-extradite-kulbhushan-jadhav-says-aziz>

- **First drone strike in Pakistan under new US administration**

A suspected drone strike in Pakistan's tribal region has killed at least two people in what appears to be the first US airstrike carried out under the President Donald Trump administration.

More Details:

<http://www.khaama.com/first-drone-strike-in-pakistan-under-new-us-administration-02315>

- **Pakistan looks to aviation in ambitious defence export push**

Nuclear-armed Pakistan is seeking to ramp up defence exports amid simmering regional tensions and a surge in the global arms trade.

More Details:

<http://www.livemint.com/Politics/5Odb0ZUVKhAdodlWVy45gJ/Pakistan-looks-to-aviation-in-ambitious-defence-export-push.html>

- **Pakistan should shut down Deobandi schools: US Congressman**

Pakistan needs to be serious about closing down 600 Deobandi madrassas in the country, an influential US lawmaker has said, underlining that there is a prevailing sentiment in the Congress and Trump administration that such schools are breeding ground for terrorists.

More Details:

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/world/us/pakistan-should-shut-down-deobandi-schools-us-congressman/articleshow/57442759.cms>

- **Pakistan approves plan to merge tribal regions**

Pakistan has approved a plan to merge a volatile tribal region in its northwest with the main land. For decades, the semi-autonomous region has been ruled under colonial laws which authorized Islamabad to punish an entire tribe over crimes committed by one individual.

More Details:

<http://www.presstv.com/Detail/2017/03/02/512768/Pakistan-approves-plan-to-merge-tribal-regions>

## 10. TURKEY AND THE MIDDLE EAST

- **Turkish PM warns allies about YPG, PYD in Syria**

Turkey's allies should decide whether they will continue their way with Turkey or terrorist organizations, Prime Minister Binali Yıldırım said Thursday. Speaking at the fourth International Ombudsman Symposium at the presidential complex in Ankara, Yıldırım said some terrorist

organizations "which have given Turkey a headache for years" were trying to exploit the situation in Syria, and attempting to take up new positions under different names like PYD and YPG.

More Details:

<http://www.worldbulletin.net/turkey/185660/turkish-pm-warns-allies-about-ypg-pyd-in-syria>

- **Turkey urges US to keep pledges on PKK/PYD withdrawal**

Turkey expects the PKK/PYD elements in northern Syria to withdraw to the east bank of the Euphrates, Turkey's defense minister said Friday. "We expect the coalition forces, especially the U.S., to keep the promises given to Turkey in this regard," Fikri Isik told journalists, adding that Turkey's priority is the city of Manbij.

More Details:

<http://aa.com.tr/en/middle-east/turkey-urges-us-to-keep-pledges-on-pkk-pyd-withdrawal/763190>

*\*This media summary is prepared by **ORSAM Middle East Research Assistant Firuze Yağmur Gökler**. It covers news and commentaries as reported by the national media sources publishing in the Middle Eastern countries. The views expressed are not those of ORSAM and their inclusion does not imply factual accuracy.*

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