



MIDDLE EAST DAILY BULLETIN

GÜNLÜK ORTADOĐU BÜLTENİ

Domestic Policy in the Middle East Countries

Bölge Ülkelerinde İç Siyaset

The Restructuring Procees of Iraq

Irak'ın Yeniden Yapılanma Süreci

Energy Security

Enerji Güvenliđi

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1. IRAQ

- **382 civilians killed, 908 wounded in Iraq violence in January: UN**

Terrorist acts, violence and armed conflicts across Iraq killed a total of 382 civilians and wounded 908 others in January, the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) said on Wednesday. A UNAMI statement said that figures of casualties do not include the security members, as the Iraqi military authorities in early December criticized the figures announced by UNAMI about the deaths of the security forces for the previous month of November.

More details:

<http://en.abna24.com/service/middle-east-west-asia/archive/2017/02/02/808924/story.html>

- **US-Led Coalition Resumes Bombing in Iraqi Mosul**

The US-led coalition resumed airstrikes on Daesh's positions near the Iraqi city of Mosul on Wednesday, Operation Inherent Resolve said in a press release. The coalition conducted no airstrikes near Mosul on Tuesday for the first time in several months; Operation Inherent Resolve spokesman Col. John Dorrian said bad weather had prevented the strikes.

More details:

<https://sputniknews.com/middleeast/201702021050277073-us-coalition-mosul-airstrikes/>

- **50,000 Iraqis return to homes in war-battered E. Mosul**

Almost 50,000 displaced people have returned to their homes in eastern Mosul and the city's southern Qayyarah district, both of which were recently recaptured by the Iraqi army from the Islamic State terrorist group, according to Iraq's Displacement and Migration Ministry. "The ministry is trying to persuade displaced people to leave the camps and return to liberated areas so the camps might be used to accommodate those expected to be displaced in upcoming operations to retake western Mosul," ministry spokesman Sattar Nowruz told Anadolu Agency.

More details:

<http://thepeninsulaqatar.com/article/02/02/2017/50,000-Iraqis-return-to-homes-in-war-battered-E.-Mosul>

- **Italian Defense Minister: Italy continues military support to Peshmerga**

The Kurdistan Region President met with the Italian Defense Minister and discussed bilateral relations and the war against Islamic State (IS). The meeting between the Kurdistan Region President

Masoud Barzani and an Italian military delegation headed by the Defense Minister, Roberta Pinotti, took place in the town of Pirmam, also known as Salahadin.

More details:

<http://www.kurdistan24.net/en/news/7b1c4536-863f-477e-a421-99572500e6f0/Italian-Defense-Minister--Italy-continues-military-support-to-Peshmerga->

- **Days of ISIL are numbered, says UN envoy as nation prepares for unified Iraq**

The military campaign to oust Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Da'esh) terrorists from Iraq is nearly won, but the humanitarian crisis is expected to continue for months, if not years, the United Nations top official for the country said today. "Three months after the Mosul military operation started, combat operations in the eastern part of Mosul have come to an end," the Secretary-General's Special Representative for Iraq, Ján Kubiš, told the UN Security Council during a briefing.

More details:

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=56097#.WJQrI9SLRkg>

- **Pentagon Wants Visas for Muslim Partners Affected By Trump Ban**

The Pentagon is reportedly pushing for the same exemption granted to Iraqis who served U.S. troops to be extended to U.S. "partners" in six other majority-Muslim nations under President Donald Trump's immigration halt. "The majority of the people who are affected by this [executive order] would be the Iraqi people who have helped us, such as translators," Pentagon spokesman Capt. Jeff Davis said, Stars and Stripes reported.

More details:

<http://www.newsmax.com/Newsfront/pentagon-visas-muslim-partners/2017/02/02/id/771755/>

- **White House makes exception to travel ban — for one particular group**

President Donald Trump's administration has amended the temporary travel ban to allow Iraqi interpreters who have worked with the U.S. government and military into the country, the New York Times reported Thursday. According to the report, the change came at the request of the Pentagon and has eased some frustrations generated by the executive order, which Trump signed last Friday.

More details:

<http://www.theblaze.com/news/2017/02/02/white-house-makes-exception-to-travel-ban-for-one-particular-group/>

- **Iraq must receive support post-IS 'to avoid past mistakes'**

Iraq must continue to receive support after its liberation from the Islamic State [IS] group to avoid repeating past mistakes, the UN Security Council has been told. Any sudden withdrawal of support risks plunging Iraq deeper into sectarian strife and insecurity, the UN special representative for Iraq, Jan Kubis, warned the council on Thursday.

More details:

<https://www.alaraby.co.uk/english/news/2017/2/3/iraq-must-receive-support-post-is-to-avoid-past-mistakes>

- **Blast near popular market south of Baghdad, 2 casualties**

A police source revealed that two civilians were wounded in an improvised explosive device explosion near a popular market, south of Baghdad, Alsumaria News reported on Thursday. The source said, "An improvised explosive device, planted near a popular market in Mahmudiyah area, south of Baghdad, exploded today, wounding two civilians."

More details:

<http://www.iraqinews.com/iraq-war/blast-near-popular-market-south-baghdad-2-casualties/>

- **Gorran Ready for New Round of Talks with KDP: Official**

The Change Movement (Gorran) is ready to receive Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) delegation as part of a new round of negotiations to overcome the political deadlock in the region, said an official. "Gorran is not rejecting talks with any political party in hopes of finding a solution to the hardship," said Gulistan Sa'id, a member of Gorran's National Assembly.

More details:

<http://www.basnews.com/index.php/en/news/kurdistan/327958>

- **Mam Jalal meets Masum in Slemani**

The President Jalal Talabani and Mrs. Hero Ahmed received today Thursday 2ed of February, the Iraqi President Fuad Masum in Mam Jalal office in Slemani city as well for Masum's accompanied delegation. The President Masum expressed his happiness for Mam Jalal improving health condition.

More details:

http://www.pukmedia.com/EN/EN_Direje.aspx?Jimare=39633

- **PM Barzani: Baghdad Failed to Help Erbil**

Barring the military coordination between Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) and the Iraqi Federal Government for the ongoing Mosul operation, there have been no other improvements in the ties between them, said KRG Prime Minister Nechirvan Barzani. During a meeting with Gerd Mueller, German Federal Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development, Barzani said Baghdad has failed to provide Erbil with humanitarian aid while KRG is hosting nearly 2 million IDPs and refugees.

More details:

<http://www.basnews.com/index.php/en/news/kurdistan/327948>

- **Mosul's Ninewah Oberoi Hotel Catered to Elites: from Saddam Allies to Bombers**

Mosul- When ISIS seized the five-star Ninewah Oberoi Hotel in east Mosul it replaced wealthy Iraqi patrons with another kind of elite — foreign fighters and suicide bombers seen as the group's most prized members. The Iraqi army's recent capture of the ruined compound — renamed Hotel Waritheen (Inheritors) by ISIS — deprived the militants of a strategic site that offers a comprehensive view across the vast city.

More details:

<http://english.aawsat.com/2017/02/article55366789/mosuls-ninewah-oberoi-hotel-catered-elites-saddam-allies-bombers>

- **Us-Led Coalition Trains Mosul Police, Plans For Is-Free Iraq**

The U.S.-led coalition is planning for the day when Iraq will be free of the Islamic State group, ramping up training of a future Mosul police force - even as the battle for the rest of the city is briefly on hold. Sometime during the lull, significant numbers of the security forces are expected to move into villages scattered across on the plains of Ninevah province around Mosul and also into parts of the city retaken from IS over the past three months.

More details:

http://hosted.ap.org/dynamic/stories/M/ML_IRAQ_MOSUL_POLICE?SITE=AP&SECTION=HOME&TEMPLATE=DEFAULT

- **Children Mutilated in Mosul; 66 Killed in Iraq**

The U.S. government admitted to the deaths of 11 civilians during four airstrikes between Oct. 25 and Dec. 9 in Iraq and Syria. At least 66 were killed and 11 more were wounded: In Baghdad, an I.E.D. killed a policeman and wounded three more in Hor Rajab. A blast in Mahmoudiya wounded two

civilians. In Mosul, militants cut off the hands of two minors for not participating in military training. At least 18 militants were killed trying to cross the Tigris River in rowboats.

More details:

<http://original.antiwar.com/updates/2017/02/02/children-mutilated-in-mosul-66-killed-in-iraq/>

- **Archbishop Warda had been invited by a member of Congress to talk about the persecution of Iraqi Christians**

An Iraqi archbishop has been forced to postpone a scheduled visit to America following President Donald Trump's temporary ban on citizens from several Muslim countries travelling to the US. Mgr John Kozar, president of Catholic Near East Welfare Association, was due to receive a visit from Chaldean Catholic Archbishop Bashar Warda of Erbil, Iraq, in order to discuss the persecution of Iraqi Christians.

More details:

<http://www.catholicherald.co.uk/news/2017/02/02/refugee-ban-forces-iraqi-archbishop-to-cancel-visit-to-the-us/>

- **Baghdad angered by Trump's words on Iran role in neighboring Iraq**

Iraq has roundly rejected US President Donald Trump's recent remarks that Iran is "taking over" the neighboring Arab country. Trump had tweeted on Wednesday that "Iran is rapidly taking over more and more of Iraq," prompting a harsh reaction by Sa'ad al-Hadithi, the spokesman for Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi's office, Iraq's private satellite channel al-Sharqiya reported.

More details:

<http://www.presstv.com/Detail/2017/02/03/508900/Iraq-Iran-Trump-Abadi>

2. SYRIA

- **Turkey to meet Syrian opposition, rebel groups in Ankara on Friday**

Turkey's foreign ministry undersecretary will hold talks with representatives of the Syrian opposition in Ankara on Friday, ministry sources said, ahead of UN-sponsored peace talks on Syria scheduled for later this month.

More Details:

<http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-4917138,00.html>

- **9 Syrian Officials Are Accused of Torture in Spanish Court**

International lawyers have filed a criminal complaint against nine Syrian security and intelligence officials in a Spanish court, accusing them of torture and other human rights violations. It is the first case specifically citing members of Syria's government to be heard in a Western court.

More Details:

https://www.nytimes.com/2017/02/02/world/europe/spain-syria-torture-case.html?_r=0

- **Syria Government claims army has freed 32 towns from Isis**

Syrian government troops have driven Isis out of dozens of settlements and 100 square miles of territory north-east of Aleppo in the past three weeks, the army said yesterday.

More Details:

<http://www.morningstaronline.co.uk/a-5576-Syria-Government-claims-army-has-freed-32-towns-from-Isis>

- **Aleppo's Twitter girl Bana Alabed to Trump: Syrian kids not terrorists**

Bana Alabed, 7, a Syrian girl whose Twitter posts on life during wartime in Aleppo made her a phenomenon, pleaded to U.S. President Donald Trump to lift the ban on Syrians. Trump has stirred up a storm with his executive order to suspend refugee resettlement and ban the arrival of Syrian migrants coming to the United States.

More Details:

<http://www.dailysabah.com/turkey/2017/02/02/aleppos-twitter-girl-bana-alabed-to-trump-syrian-kids-not-terrorists>

- **A Russian constitution for Syria?**

The majority of Syrians have rejected the draft constitution proposed by Russia that was presented to the armed opposition factions at the end of the Astana Conference in Kazakhstan on the conflict in the country on 23 January.

More Details:

<http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/News/19553.aspx>

- **SyriaThe Defense Ministry's failed handling of Hezbollah drone threat**

In recent years, several Iranian-made drones sent by Hezbollah and Hamas managed to infiltrate Israeli territory with impunity. Meanwhile, the Defense Ministry is taking its time procuring practice drones for IAF pilots to train with.

More Details:

<http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-4916226,00.html>

- **Syria expands anti-Daesh operations**

Syria's military command announced it was expanding military operations against the Daesh group in the country's north on Thursday, a move that draws government forces closer to potential conflict with Turkish troops and allied Syrian opposition forces fighting extremists in the region.

More Details:

<http://gulftoday.ae/portal/9b08af98-c4b6-4c00-a2da-047578caad47.aspx>

- **UN chief: Syria dialogue must focus on transition for success**

The UN wants upcoming talks in Geneva between the Syrian regime and opposition groups to be a success and this means focusing on core issues including a transitional government, Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has said.

More Details:

<http://www.arabnews.com/node/1048356/middle-east>

- **Water Pipeline Supplying Syria's Raqqa Destroyed**

Syria's state media is reporting that U.S.-led coalition aircraft have destroyed the main water pipeline supplying the northern city of Raqqa. The coalition has been targeting the Islamic State group in the area for more than two years and U.S.-backed Kurdish-led fighters have been on the offensive in nearby areas.

More Details:

http://hosted.ap.org/dynamic/stories/M/ML_SYRIA?SITE=AP&SECTION=HOME&TEMPLATE=DEFAULT&CTIME=2017-02-03-05-40-36

- **US supplies armoured vehicles to Arab force in eastern Syria**

The US-led coalition has supplied several Guardian armoured vehicles to the Syrian Arab Coalition (SAC) that is fighting the Islamic State in eastern Syria, Colonel John Dorrian, the spokesman for

Operation 'Inherent Resolve' said on 1 February. Speaking during a press conference, Col Dorrian said the Guardians are up-armoured Ford vehicles: an apparent reference to a type made by the International Armored Group (IAG) using the Ford F550 chassis.

More Details:

<http://www.janes.com/article/67427/us-supplies-armoured-vehicles-to-arab-force-in-eastern-syria>

3. IRAN

- **Iran ambassador to DPRK submits credentials**

Iranian President Hassan Rouhani described separating nations with walls and banning people from entering a country as measures expected from novice politicians, seemingly in reference to recent moves by new US President Donald Trump.

More Details:

<http://www.irna.ir/en/News/82413165/>

- **Iran's ballistic missile test successful: Defense minister**

"This missile test was successful," the Iranian minister said that "Iran's missile tests are not, and have never been, in violation of the JCPOA (Iran's nuclear deal with six world powers) or [UN Security Council] Resolution 2231", according to presstv.ir.

More Details:

<http://iran-daily.com/News/176871.html>

- **Velayati: Iran to Press On with Missile Program**

A senior Iranian official described a recent missile test as being part of the country's defense programs, saying Iran will push ahead with its missile activities regardless of the baseless threatening rhetoric from a rookie US president who needs to learn from the past.

More Details:

<https://www.tasnimnews.com/en/news/2017/02/02/1316189/velayati-iran-to-press-on-with-missile-program>

- **Romania eager to expand trade with Iran**

In the meeting, President of the Bacau County Board, Sorin Brasoveanu, and Head of provincial Chamber of Commerce, Douro Simovic, as well as a group of trade and economic activists from the province called for expansion of cooperation in the fields of culture and economy.

More Details:

<http://en.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13951113001291>

- **Iran Rejects US Allegations as Baseless, Provocative**

Iran's Foreign Ministry dismissed as "baseless and provocative" the recent allegations that US president's national security advisor Michael Flynn has made against Tehran, describing the accusations as a ploy to incite regional tension and sell more weapons.

More Details:

<https://www.tasnimnews.com/en/news/2017/02/02/1316260/iran-rejects-us-allegations-as-baseless-provocative>

- **UAE Foreign Ministry summons Iranian charge d'affaires over Yemen**

The Emirati Foreign Ministry has summoned the Iranian chargé d'affaires to protest what Abu Dhabi claims to be Tehran's "provision of weapons" to Yemen's Houthi fighters, an allegation the Islamic Republic has repeatedly dismissed as unfounded.

More Details:

<http://en.abna24.com/service/iran/archive/2017/02/02/808966/story.html>

- **Armenian PM to Visit Iran Soon**

Armenia's Defense Minister Vigen Sargsyan said his country's prime minister will pay a visit to Iran in the near future.

More Details:

<https://www.tasnimnews.com/en/news/2017/02/02/1316322/armenian-pm-to-visit-iran-soon>

- **Iran's missile tests not in contradiction with UNSC Resolution 2231**

Qasemi made the remark on Thursday in reaction to the anti-Iran claims of the US President's National Security Advisor, Michael Flynn.

More Details:

<http://www.irna.ir/en/News/82413431/>

- **Washington’s war threat against Iran**

It is just two weeks since President Donald Trump was sworn into office after delivering an inaugural address proclaiming his policy of “America First” and vowing to defend the United States against “the ravages of other countries.”

More Details:

<http://www.wsws.org/en/articles/2017/02/03/pers-f03.html>

4. ISRAEL – PALESTINE

- **Israel PM Netanyahu vows to establish new West Bank settlement**

Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu has said he will build the first new West Bank settlement in over 20 years. Meanwhile, the Trump administration in the US pushed back against further settlements.

More details:

<http://www.dw.com/en/israel-pm-netanyahu-vows-to-establish-new-west-bank-settlement/a-37392389>

- **Trump Warns Israel: Stop Announcing New Settlements**

The White House warned Israel on Thursday to cease settlement announcements that are “unilateral” and “undermining” of President Donald Trump’s effort to forge Middle East peace, a senior administration official told The Jerusalem Post.

More details:

<http://www.jpost.com/Israel-News/Politics-And-Diplomacy/Trump-warns-Israel-Stop-announcing-new-settlements-480446>

- **US says Israeli settlements 'may not be helpful'**

While stopping short of criticising settlement expansion, White House appears to cool rhetoric on Israel-Palestine.

More details:

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/02/israeli-settlements-helpful-170203041339270.html>

- **Palestinian jailed for hacking Israeli drones**

A court in Israel sentenced a Palestinian computer engineer from Gaza to nine years in jail on Thursday for hacking into Israeli drones for the Islamic Jihad group, the justice ministry said.

More details:

<https://www.alaraby.co.uk/english/news/2017/2/3/palestinian-jailed-for-hacking-israeli-drones>

- **Police brace for 'price tag' attacks in wake of Amona evacuation**

Israel's security forces are bracing for revenge attacks against Palestinians by far-right activists after the evacuation of the illegal West Bank outpost of Amona on Thursday.

More details:

<http://www.timesofisrael.com/police-brace-for-price-tag-attacks-in-wake-of-amona-evacuation/>

- **World Vision's Gaza head pleads not guilty to helping Hamas**

The Gaza head of the global Christian charity World Vision on Thursday pleaded not guilty in an Israeli court to aiding the Hamas terrorist group, his employers said, according to AFP.

More details:

<http://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx/224349>

- **Bangladesh president condemns Israeli settlement in meeting with Abbas**

Bangladesh wants a quick solution to all the problems in the establishment of an independent state of Palestine, President Md Abdul Hamid has told his Palestinian counterpart Mahmoud Abbas.

More details:

<http://bdnews24.com/bangladesh/2017/02/03/bangladesh-president-condemns-israeli-settlement-in-meeting-with-abbas>

- **Israeli forces attack inmates at Negev prison facility**

Israeli Special Forces on Thursday attacked Palestinian inmates at an Israeli prison facility in the Negev Desert, members of a Palestinian committee said.

More details:

<http://aa.com.tr/en/middle-east/israeli-forces-attack-inmates-at-negev-prison-facility/740422>

- **First Israeli-Turkish Diplomatic Talks in years Held in Ankara**

Israel and Turkey held their first high level political consultation in six years this week, issuing a joint communique reaffirming “the importance of better Turkish-Israeli relations for the stability and the security of the region.” Foreign Ministry director-general Yuval Rotem returned to Israel from Turkey on Thursday, following the meeting the day before.

More details:

<http://www.jpost.com/Israel-News/First-Israeli-Turkish-diplomatic-talks-in-years-held-in-Ankara-480406>

- **Israelis Are Doing a Thriving but Discreet Business with the Arab World**

When an Israeli with Saudi business ties was disinvited as a speaker to a London conference because a Saudi was to be present, the Israeli pointed out that the two are friends, Bloomberg business news reported.

More details:

<http://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/business/1.769261>

5. JORDAN and LEBANON

- **Jordan's King Warns Trump against Moving U.S. Embassy in Israel to Jerusalem, State Media Reports**

Jordan's King Abdullah warned U.S. President Donald Trump against relocating the American embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem in their meeting in Washington on Thursday, the Jordanian state news agency reported on Thursday. Abdullah, the first Middle East leader to meet the U.S. president since his inauguration, told Trump that moving the embassy could threaten the two-state solution and have a detrimental effect on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

More Details:

<http://www.haaretz.com/us-news/1.769266>

- **Jordan signs deal to receive 100,000 tons of wheat from US in food aid**

The Jordanian and US governments on Wednesday signed a 2017 US wheat grant agreement of 100,000 tons as part of the food aid program implemented by the US, a Planning and International Cooperation Ministry statement said.

More details:

<http://www.albawaba.com/business/jordan-signs-deal-receive-100000-tons-wheat-us-food-aid-932768>

- **Lebanon: Aoun Hints he would Resort to Constitutional Powers over Electoral Law Dispute**

Lebanese President Michel Aoun said on Thursday that he would not accept any violations of the Constitution during his term.

More details:

<http://english.aawsat.com/2017/02/article55366794/lebanon-aoun-hints-resort-constitutional-powers-electoral-law-dispute>

- **Lebanon to start oil production in 2018**

Lebanon expects to start oil production in 2018 and will deposit the resulting revenues into a sovereign wealth fund, President Michel Aoun said on Tuesday.

More details:

<https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20170202-lebanon-to-start-oil-production-in-2018/>

- **Lebanese Women Call for 30 percent Quota in Parliamentary Seats**

Lebanese women rallied on Wednesday to call for an increased female representation in any parliamentary electoral law approved by the different political parties. While women constitute 51 percent of the Lebanese population and 54 percent of university graduates, they are merely represented in Parliament, as they currently occupy 3.1 percent of parliamentary seats.

More details:

<http://english.aawsat.com/2017/02/article55366765/lebanese-women-call-30-percent-quota-parliamentary-seats>

- **Lebanon Forces Syrian Families to Decide Between Homelessness and Child Labor**

According to the United Nations, the Syrian conflict has displaced approximately 6.6 million people in Syria, and forced another 4.8 million to seek refuge in countries around the world.

More details:

<https://globalvoices.org/2017/02/02/lebanon-forces-syrian-families-to-decide-between-homelessness-and-child-labor/>

- **Report: Kataeb, Mustaqbal Discuss Ties, New Electoral Law Format**

A meeting between a Kataeb Party delegation and al-Mustaqbal Movement official at the Grand Serail on Thursday came as part of a series of meetings held by Kataeb with officials to tackle the controversial electoral law.

More details:

<http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/224843-report-kataeb-mustaqbal-discuss-ties-new-electoral-law-format>

- **Salhab: Polemic over election law political problem**

Member of Parliament, Salim Salhab, said on Friday that polemic over the electoral law has proven to be a political problem, pushing concerned sides to eliminate hindrances on the course of the rushing deadlines.

More details:

<http://nna-leb.gov.lb/en/show-news/74886/Salhab-Polemic-over-election-law-political-problem>

- **King Abdullah II Meets with U.S. President**

U.S. President Donald Trump Thursday met with Jordanian King Abdullah II, marking the first visit by an Arab leader since the new administration took over in January.

More details:

<http://english.aawsat.com/2017/02/article55366796/king-abdullah-ii-meets-u-s-president>

6. ARABIAN PENINSULA AND THE GULF OF BASRA

- **Qatar gifts 10 ambulances for Balochistan**

Ambassador of the State of Qatar to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Saqr Bin Mubarak Al Mansori handed over 10 state-of-the-art ambulances to Abdul Qadir Baloch, minister for states and Frontier Regions, elected member of Federal Parliament from Kharan, as a gift from Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al Thani, Emir of the State of Qatar to the residents of Baluchistan to help elevating the level of health services in the province in general and Kharan and Washuk in particular, says a press release.

More Details

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/183623-Qatar-gifts-10-ambulances-for-Balochistan>

- **Dubai to produce report on real estate prospects**

Dubai Land Department (DLD) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Dubai Economic Council (DEC), to collaboratively prepare a detailed annual report on the prospects for the real estate sector in Dubai.

More Details

http://www.tradearabia.com/news/CONS_320173.html

- **Emirates Energy Award continues to receive applications from individuals and organisations**

The third Emirates Energy Award (EEA), which is being held under the patronage of HH Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, under the theme 'Innovative Solutions for Clean Energy,' continues to receive applications from individuals and organisations from the private and public sectors from across the Middle East and North Africa (MENA).

More Details

<http://www.albawaba.com/business/pr/emirates-energy-award-continues-receive-applications-individuals-and-organisations-93279>

- **Bahrain criticised for restoring arrest powers to intelligence agency**

Bahrain has restored arrest and investigatory powers to an intelligence agency that conducted house raids and systematically tortured detainees in 2011, Human Rights Watch has claimed.

More Details

<http://www.arabianbusiness.com/bahrain-criticised-for-restoring-arrest-powers-intelligence-agency-661776.html>

- **Pentagon, White House defend Yemen raid**

The Pentagon and White House on Thursday defended the planning and execution of a U.S. Special Operations raid in Yemen that killed civilians along with a Navy SEAL, saying there was sufficient intelligence to carry it out and that it had been planned for months.

More Details

<http://www.startribune.com/pentagon-white-house-defend-yemen-raid/412627163/>

- **Yemen: Authorities claim US warships pounding al-Qaeda militants 'for days'**

Officials in Yemen claim US warships have been pounding al-Qaeda militants in the al-Maraqisha mountains in the south of the war-torn country for the past five days. "Ships fired several missiles towards the al-Maraqisha mountains, where al Qaeda elements are based. The ships are widely believed to be American," one Yemeni official, who asked not to be identified, told Reuters. "We have received no information on the outcome of the shelling."

More Details

<http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/yemen-authorities-claim-us-warships-pounding-al-qaeda-militants-days-1604576>

- **Saudi sentenced 7 years in prison for entering Syria, joining Al-Nusra**

The Specialized Criminal Court in Riyadh issued a preliminary verdict Thursday of seven years in prison against a Saudi national after being found guilty of traveling to conflict zones in Syria, and joining Al-Nusra Front and a other terrorist groups. He also was convicted of receiving training in their camps on the use of weapons.

More Details

<http://www.arabnews.com/node/1048471/saudi-arabia>

- **Attacking Saudi Ships Endangers the Security of Red Sea**

The Advisor of the Minister of Defense and the Spokesman for the Arabic Coalition, Gen. Ahmed al-Assiri in an interview with Hadath TV said that Saudi frigates were monitoring the shipping in the port of Hodeidah that Houthi's attack endangered the sailing security in the Red Sea."

More Details

<http://www.ncr-iran.org/en/news/iran-world/22080-attacking-saudi-ships-endangers-the-security-of-red-sea>

- **Oman Crude Oil Financial contract closes at US\$55.41**

The price of Oman Crude Oil Financial Contract, DME Oman, for April delivery, closed at US\$55.41 a barrel at Dubai Mercantile Exchange at 12:30 p.m., Dubai time.

More Details

<http://www.wam.ae/en/news/economics/1395306827025.html>

7. EGYPT

- **Egypt rejects European proposals for 'illegal migrants' camps in Africa**

Egypt announced its rejection on Thursday of establishing camps for irregular immigrants in Africa, following a recent meeting of European Union (EU) interior ministers who discussed the possibility of financing camps on the continent.

More Details

<http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/64/257432/-.aspx>

- **Egypt's opposition challenges government in court**

Led by the Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies (CIHRS) and four of the country's best-known dissident lawyers, the opposition group on Wednesday filed a case against Egypt's President Abdel Fattah el-Sissi at the State Council seeking an injunction on the so-called assembly law, which has been used by the government to underpin the arrest and imprisonment of thousands of Egyptian demonstrators.

More Details

<http://www.dw.com/en/egypts-opposition-challenges-government-in-court/a-37386611>

- **Egyptian Minister of Administrative Reform arrives in Beirut**

The Egyptian Planning and Administrative Reform Minister, Ashraf El-Araby, just arrived in Beirut to attend a meeting of the Arab Economic Forum to be held in Lebanon.

More Details

<http://nna-leb.gov.lb/en/show-news/74874/Egyptian-Minister-of-Administrative-Reform-arrives-in-Beirut>

- **Egypt's foreign currency inflows rise after CB move**

An inflow of \$9 billion into Egyptian banks since the country's central bank (CB) floated its currency shows confidence in the economy is returning, but bankers and economists say investors need reassurance to attract higher volumes.

More Details

<http://gulftoday.ae/portal/64e7784d-fb74-4df4-936a-14fea72e4a0d.aspx>

- **Tactics of a risk-taking regime**

There has been little debate on the nature of Egypt's current malaise. The counterrevolution has comprised unprecedented political, economic and social attacks, which began before the July 2013 coup, and took a bloody turn in a series of massacres and judicial rulings that went beyond targeting the Muslim Brotherhood to include all oppositional forces.

More Details

<http://www.madamasr.com/en/2017/02/02/opinion/u/tactics-of-a-risk-taking-regime/>

- **Egypt rides resurgent wave for emerging market borrowing**

For Amr al-Garhy, Egypt's Minister of Finance, winning over international bond investors meant convincing them that last year's sharp currency devaluation marked a turning point for the Egyptian economy.

More Details

<http://en.amwalalghad.com/business/financial-institutions/54706-ft-egypt-rides-resurgent-wave-for-emerging-market-borrowing.html>

- **Massive turnout at Egypt's largest book fair despite economic crisis: organizer**

A massive turnout has been seen during the first week of the recently-inaugurated 48th round of annual Cairo International Book Fair (CIBF) regardless of Egypt's difficult economic conditions, the fair's chief organizer said in an exclusive interview with Xinhua.

More Details

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-02/02/c_136026484.htm

- **The we want to live campaign: Impoverishment is a political choice**

Karam Abdel-Halim, the head of the Independent Union for Workers at Suez Canal Authority Clubs, is speaking from the podium to an audience that has gathered for the mid-January inaugural meeting of the Popular Campaign against Policies of Impoverishment, alternatively known as the We Want to live campaign. The campaign is the first of its kind to contest the economic policies marshaled by the government and Central Bank of Egypt and their effect on large swaths of the country's society.

More Details

<http://www.madamasr.com/en/2017/02/02/feature/economy/the-we-want-to-live-campaign-impoverishment-is-a-political-choice/>

- **Egypt Explores for Natural Gas with Eye on Exports by 2019**

Egypt may announce new discoveries of natural gas by the second half of this year, Oil Minister Tarek El Molla said, bringing it closer to its goal of self-sufficiency by 2019. Egypt will start exporting natural gas in 2019, Mohamed El Masry, chairman of Egyptian Natural Gas Holding Co., told reporters in Cairo. It will import 43 to 45 cargoes of liquefied natural gas between March and December this year from Oman, Russia's Rosneft PJSC, and France's Engie SA, to be paid over six months, he said.

More Details

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2017-02-02/egypt-explores-for-natural-gas-with-eye-on-exports-by-2019>

8. NORTH AFRICA

- **Algerian parliament polls to be held May 4: Presidency**

The Algerian presidency on Thursday announced that the country's upcoming parliamentary polls would be held on May 4. "President Abdelaziz Bouteflika signed a decree today calling on voters to elect members of the National People's Assembly on May 4," read a statement issued by the president's office and carried by Algeria's official news agency.

More Details:

<http://aa.com.tr/en/africa/algerian-parliament-polls-to-be-held-may-4-presidency/740140>

- **Nine New Dams to Become Operational In Algeria By 2019**

Nine new dams are planned to be put into operation by 2019 throughout Algeria, says Water Resource and Environment Minister Abdelkader Ouali. He said in Ain Defla in northern Algeria Tuesday that five of them would be commissioned during the course of 2017.

More Details:

<http://www.bernama.com/bernama/v8/wn/newsworld.php?id=1325688>

- **Morocco's accession to AU without preconditions is victory for Sahrawi cause**

The representative of the Polisario Front in the United Kingdom Mohamed Limam Mohamed Ali said Thursday, in London, that Morocco's accession to the African Union and the abandonment of the conditions previously issued, and which was the source of its withdrawal in 1984 from the Organization of African Unity, were a "victory for the Sahrawi cause."

More Details:

<http://en.aps.dz/world/16529-morocco%E2%80%99s-accession-to-au-without-preconditions-is-victory-for-sahrawi-cause>

- **Morocco's budget deficit to decline to 3.4% of GDP in 2017: Fitch Group's BMI Research**

Fitch's group BMI Research said in a statement that this year, the "Moroccan government will maintain its fiscal consolidation efforts, which will in turn result in a gradual reduction of public debt levels."

More Details:

<http://themoroccantimes.com/2017/02/22000/moroccos-budget-deficit-to-decline-to-3-4-of-gdp-in-2017-fitch-groups-bmi-research>

- **Tunisia Digital 2020: new structure to carry out projects**

(The government is called upon to set up a new structure to guarantee the realisation of projects included in the Tunisia Digital 2020 strategy, said Minister of Communication Technologies and the Digital Economy Anouar Maarouf.

More Details:

<http://www.tap.info.tn/en/Portal-Top-Slide-EN/8676764-tunisia-digital>

- **Senior Tunisian officials accused of corruption**

The judiciary in Tunisia look set to investigate 12 senior government officials suspected of involvement in "financial corruption", the General Prosecutor's office announced on Wednesday. A spokesman for the prosecutor said that the officials are spread across a number of ministries and include the man who served as state attorney between 2011 and 2012.

More Details:

<https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20170202-senior-tunisian-officials-accused-of-corruption/>

- **Libya may allow EU to deploy ships in their waters**

Fayez Al-Sarraj, the leader of the Government of National Accord (GNA), has said that NATO or the European Union (EU) could deploy ships to operate in Libyan waters. They would work alongside the Libyan national military coastguards, to slow down and tackle the flow of migrants travelling across the Mediterranean to reach Europe.

More Details:

<http://libyapropect.com/index.php/2017/02/02/libya-may-allow-eu-to-deploy-ships-in-their-waters/>

- **Clashes break out in Tripoli's Janzour district**

The Fursan Janzour (Janzour Knights) Brigade in a district western Tripoli has engaged in clashes with groups from the Tribes Army of western Libya – mainly from Wershefana and Zintan provinces – Thursday night.

More Details:

<http://www.libyanexpress.com/clashes-break-out-in-tripolis-janzour-district/>

- **Italy and Libya sign memorandum on stopping migration flow**

Italian Prime Minister Paolo Gentiloni and Libyan counterpart Fayez al-Serraj yesterday announced they had signed a memorandum of understanding to combat illegal migration and human trafficking in the Mediterranean. As EU leaders meet in Malta for a summit under the Maltese presidency, European Council President Donald Tusk said that the goal of stemming the flow of migrants from Libya to Italy was “within reach” under the new deal.

More Details:

http://www.maltatoday.com.mt/news/world/74072/italy_and_libya_sign_memorandum_on_stopping_migration_flow#.WJRE-1OLTcs

- **Tunisia attack survivor describes coming face to face with gunman**

A survivor of the Tunisia terror attack came face to face with the gunman who shot her and her husband before he calmly walked away, showing no emotion, an inquest has heard. Gina Van Dort described seeing Seifeddine Rezgui, who opened fire at the five-star Riu Imperial Marhaba Hotel in Sousse on June 26 2015, walking towards where she and her husband had tried to hide.

More Details:

<http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/uk/tunisia-attack-survivor-describes-coming-face-to-face-with-gunman-35418234.html>

9. AFGHANISTAN – PAKISTAN

- **Police officer killed in N. Afghan province**

A police officer has been killed in the northern Kunduz province in Afghanistan, a local security official said Friday.

More Details:

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-02/03/c_136028610.htm

- **5 Taliban hideouts destroyed in Helmand air and ground operations**

Five hideouts of the Taliban group were destroyed during the joint military operations in the restive southern Helmand province.

More Details:

<http://www.khaama.com/5-taliban-hideouts-destroyed-in-helmand-air-and-ground-operations-02796>

- **2 Toronto councillors vote against Afghan war memorial**

A proposed monument to honour Afghanistan war veterans has raised the ire of some city councillors. City council voted 37-2 this week to create the memorial with the help of Canada Company, a registered charity which helps find ways to honour the sacrifice of veterans.

More Details:

<http://cnews.canoe.com/CNEWS/Canada/2017/02/02/22701536.html?cid=rssnewscanada>

- **Trump is asked to pardon Army officer convicted of Afghan murders**

A new wrinkle was added this week in the effort to free an Army first lieutenant convicted in the killing of Afghans – a pardon request to President Donald Trump.

More Details:

<https://www.stripes.com/news/trump-is-asked-to-pardon-army-officer-convicted-of-afghan-murders-1.452228>

- **Afghan Government Lost 15% of Its Territory Last Year**

The government of Afghanistan lost almost 15 percent of its territory last year, as Taliban insurgents continued to launch attacks amid declines in U.S. and allied military personnel.

More Details:

<http://freebeacon.com/national-security/afghan-government-lost-15-percent-territory-last-year/>

- **Amid Beijing's 'Silk Road' splurge, Chinese firms eye Pakistan**

Chinese companies are in talks to snap up more businesses and land in Pakistan after sealing two major deals in recent months, a sign of deepening ties after Beijing vowed to plough \$57 billion into a new trade route across the South Asian nation.

More Details:

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/world/china/amid-beijings-silk-road-splurge-chinese-firms-eye-pakistan/articleshow/56949344.cms>

- **Pakistan acting under pressure: Defence Expert on Hafiz Saeed's house arrest**

Defence Expert Brigadier (Retd.) S. K. Chatterji on Friday said that Jamaat-ud-Dawa (JuD) chief Hafiz Saeed's house arrest clearly indicates that Pakistan is acting under pressure at the moment.

More Details:

<http://www.newindianexpress.com/nation/2017/feb/03/pakistan-acting-under-pressure-defence-expert-on-hafiz-saeeds-house-arrest-1566533.html>

- **No change in visa policy for Pakistan: US embassy**

US Embassy spokesperson on Thursday said that the US has not changed visa policy for Pakistan, adding that visas were being issued on a routine basis as these were issued before Donald Trump.

More Details:

<http://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2017/02/03/no-change-in-visa-policy-for-pakistan-us-embassy/>

- **Pak economy on way to getting higher growth: PM**

Executive Director of Geneva based International Trade Centre (ITC) Mrs Arancha Gonzalez on Thursday said that Pakistan's economy had achieved stability and it was further improving after the improved security and law and order situation in the country.

More Details:

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/183752-Pak-economy-on-way-to-getting-higher-growth-PM>

- **Yemeni ambassador calls for increased trade with Pakistan**

Yemen Ambassador to Pakistan, Mohammad Motahar Alashabi intimated Yemen's interest in promoting trade ties with Pakistan, noting that the current volume of bilateral trade was quite low.

More Details:

<http://dailytimes.com.pk/pakistan/02-Feb-17/yemeni-ambassador-calls-for-increased-trade-with-pakistan>

10. TURKEY AND THE MIDDLE EAST

- **Erdoğan slams Merkel for saying Islamist terror**

President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan criticized German Chancellor Angela Merkel's use of the term "Islamist terror" during a joint press conference in Turkey's capital Ankara on Thursday. "I have to clarify something that may have been misunderstood by the chancellor's public. The term 'Islamist terror' is greatly upsetting for Muslims. Such a term cannot be used, and is in fact incorrect," Erdoğan said.

More Details:

<http://www.worldbulletin.net/turkey/184145/erdogan-slams-merkel-for-saying-islamist-terror>

- **Turkish military, FSA make gains against Daesh in northern Syria, 47 terrorists killed**

The Free Syrian Army (FSA) and the Turkish Armed Forces (TSK) have captured 24 residential areas from the Daesh terrorist group over the past 24 hours in Syria's northern town of al-Bab as part of Operation Euphrates Shield, Turkish security sources said Friday. The sources, who spoke with Anadolu Agency (AA) on condition of anonymity due to restrictions on talking to the media, said Turkish troops and FSA fighters had besieged the Daesh-held town and were now on the verge of decisively capturing it.

More Details:

<http://www.dailysabah.com/war-on-terror/2017/02/03/turkish-military-fsa-make-gains-against-daesh-in-northern-syria-47-terrorists-killed>

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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