



MIDDLE EAST DAILY BULLETIN

GÜNLÜK ORTADOĐU BÜLTENİ

Domestic Policy in the Middle East Countries

Bölge Ülkelerinde İç Siyaset

The Restructuring Procces of Iraq

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1. IRAQ

- **The Swedish Minister for International Development arrived to Baghdad**

The Swedish Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for International Development Cooperation and the climate Isabella Leuven arrived in Baghdad today on an official visit to Iraq. An informed source told the National Iraqi News Agency / nina / that Leuven will discussed with the Planning Minister Salman Al-Jumaili signing of joint cooperation agreement in the field of capacity building and rehabilitation of some institution-building and the possibility of the inclusion of a number of stalled projects due to the financial crisis and falling within the axes of the Convention".

More Details:

http://www.ninanews.com/News_Details.aspx?AQwb%252fbxQYjPKoYgmVgtZwQ%253d%253d

- **Flow of Mosul IDPs to Kurdistan Region Increasing**

The Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) released a statement on Saturday announcing that the number of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) fleeing to the Kurdistan Region from Mosul increases as the operation against so-called Islamic State (IS) in western Mosul is ongoing. The statement by the KRG's Joint Crisis Coordination Center (JCC) explained that the number of IDPs coming from Mosul to the Kurdistan Region has increased to nearly 118,000 people, despite the liberation of the eastern parts of the city.

More Details:

<http://www.basnews.com/index.php/en/news/iraq/334551>

- **Iraqi forces capture strategic bridge, get closer to old Mosul**

Iraqi government forces took over a main bridge leading to central Mosul's Old City on Monday as operations press on to recapture the area occupied by Islamic State militants. Reuters quoted military sources saying that U.S.-backed Iraqi forces had taken over al-Hurriya Bridge, one of five bridges linking both sides of Mosul across the Tigris River.

More Details:

<http://www.iraqinews.com/iraq-war/iraqi-forces-capture-strategic-bridge-get-closer-old-mosul/>

- **US-led coalition admits killing at least 220 civilians in air strikes against Isis in Syria and Iraq**

The official number of civilians killed in the US-led coalition's air strikes in Syria and Iraq has risen to 220 amid fears for up to 750,000 people trapped in Mosul. Humanitarian organisations have warned

that the real total may be far higher, with monitoring group Airwars counting at least 2,400 innocent men, women and children killed in the anti-Isis bombing campaign. US Central Command, which leads Operation Inherent Resolve, confirmed 21 civilian deaths in nine new incidents in its latest round of investigations.

More Details:

http://www.shafaaq.com/en/En_NewsReader/9401b861-6dc3-49ae-9379-924208397a31/US-led-coalition-admits-killing-at-least-220-civilians-in-air-strikes-against-Isis-in-Syria-and-Iraq

- **Iraqi Forces blockade government complex- west of Mosul**

Iraqi Security Forces had blockade the government complex west of Mosul and will be liberated very soon, said Hashd al-Shaabi's Spokesperson Ahmed al-Asady in a statement. Rapid Response units and Counter Terrorism Service forces launched a fresh push into the city on Sunday after a 48-hour pause due to bad weather that hampered air surveillance, facilitating counter-attacks by the militants.

More Details:

http://www.pukmedia.com/EN/EN_Direje.aspx?Jimare=39913

- **MP: Iraq seeks to expand financial, commercial cooperation with Iran**

Head of Iraqi Parliament Foreign Policy Commission Hamam al-Hamoudi received an Iranian parliamentary delegation led by the head of Consultative Assembly's economic and reconstruction commission Mohammed Alirezaei. "We look forward to expand the parliamentary, economic and financial cooperation, twining our universities and holding specialized courses for syndicates this year," al-Hamoudi said to the Iranian delegation.

More Details:

<http://www.thebaghdadpost.com/en/story/7755/MP-Iraq-seeks-to-expand-financial-commercial-cooperation-with-Iran>

- **Anbar border guards clash with ISIS, terrorists arrested**

Commander of Anbar Border Guards, Lieutenant General Ammar al-Kobessi, announced on Sunday, that his forces clashed with members of ISIS, west of the province, while pointing out that a number of suspects were arrested, west of Rutba District, IraqiNews reported. Kobessi said in a press statement, "Today, forces from the Border Guards of the second section in Anbar, the command's commando brigade and the Popular Mobilization Units raided Abu Hayat village, west of Trebil-Waleed intersection in Rutba District (310 km west of Ramadi)."

More Details:

<https://www.almasdarnews.com/article/anbar-border-guards-clash-isis-terrorists-arrested/>

- **HN: Prague to send psychotherapists to help Yazidis in Iraq**

The Czech Foreign Ministry plans to send psychotherapists to the northern Iraqi areas vacated by Islamic State in order to help the local Yazidi community overcome the deep traumas caused to them by the jihad militants, daily Hospodarske noviny (HN) writes Friday. The Yazidis are a minority combining Islam with elements of other religions such as Hinduism, Persian Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Christianity and shamanism. While invading northern Iraq, the jihadists often executed Yazidi men and took the women away with them as sexual slaves, HN writes.

More Details:

<http://www.praguemonitor.com/2017/03/06/hn-prague-send-psychotherapists-help-yazidis-iraq>

- **Iraq Gets \$12 Billion UK Loan but Only for British Contracts**

More than 14 years after the U.S. and U.K.-led invasion, British companies continue to benefit from the aftermath of the war. The U.K. agreed Sunday to arrange loans worth US\$12.3 billion to finance infrastructure projects in Iraq over a 10 year period, a program that would only benefit British companies, an Iraqi minister said in Baghdad.

More Details:

<http://www.telesurvtv.net/english/news/Iraq-Gets-12-Billion-UK-Loan-but-Only-for-British-Contracts-20170305-0016.html>

- **New Trump executive order expected to remove Iraq from banned countries list**

President Donald Trump is preparing to sign a revised executive order temporarily barring the entry of people from certain Muslim-majority countries and halting the nation's refugee program. A White House official says plans to roll out the order are on track for Monday. The official insisted on anonymity in order to discuss the order ahead of the official announcement.

More Details:

<https://www.thestar.com/news/world/2017/03/05/new-trump-executive-order-expected-to-remove-iraq-from-banned-countries-list.html>

- **The stench of the Iraq war lingers behind today's preoccupation with fake news**

Australia invaded Iraq purely and simply to cement the alliance with the US. The purported justifications for war – preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, enforcing international law, fighting terrorism – were “mandatory rhetoric”, nothing more. So says Dr Albert

Palazzo from defence's directorate of army research and analysis, in a secret report (released under FOI) based on multiple interviews conducted within military and extensive access to classified material.

More Details:

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2017/mar/06/the-stench-of-the-iraq-war-lingers-behind-todays-preoccupation-with-fake-news>

- **Iraq and Iran agree to resolve dispute on joint oil fields**

On Feb. 20, the Iraqi Oil Ministry signed a memorandum of understanding with the Iranian Oil Ministry to settle disputes over the joint oil fields and examine the possibility of building a pipeline to export crude oil from the Kirkuk fields, in the north of Iraq, through Iran. The ministry also wants to study moving Iraqi crude oil to the Iranian Abadan refinery.

More Details:

<http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2017/03/iran-iraq-oil-sulaymaniyah-kirkuk.html>

- **Tensions Rise in Iraq As Kurdish Forces Seize Oil Pipeline**

Production from the Kirkuk fields in northern Iraq were briefly disrupted on Thursday, when Kurdish protestors seized a pumping station in order to protest the policies of Baghdad and Erbil, the capital of the autonomous Kurdish area in northern Iraq. The protest was allegedly inspired by Kurdish demands that Baghdad authorizes the construction of a refinery in Kirkuk, and they shut down a line shipping oil to Turkey. Kirkuk fields were producing 120,000 bpd before the incident temporarily shutdown operations.

More Details:

<http://oilprice.com/Energy/Energy-General/Tensions-Rise-In-Iraq-As-Kurdish-Forces-Seize-Oil-Pipeline.html>

- **'UN not doing enough for Mosul's displaced': Iraq minister**

An Iraqi minister sharply criticised UN efforts to aid civilians fleeing fighting in west Mosul on Saturday, even as the United Nations insisted that providing such assistance was the "top priority". Jassem Mohammed al-Jaff, Iraq's minister of displacement and migration slammed the "shortfall" in aid for the tens of thousands of people that have so far fled west Mosul since Iraqi forces launched an operation to retake it from the Islamic State militant group on 19 February.

More Details:

<https://www.alaraby.co.uk/english/news/2017/3/5/un-not-doing-enough-for-mosuls-displaced-iraq-minister>

- **Iraq: ISIL Blows up Houses, Executes Civilians in Mosul**

An Iraqi Federal Police officer informed on Saturday, that the ISIL group blew up ten houses, while executed seven families, South of Mosul. Colonel Khodier Saleh said in a press statement that the ISIL group blew up ten houses, few hours before the security forces storm into Nabi Sheth area, south of Mosul, Iraqi News reported.

More Details:

<http://en.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13951215000375>

- **Risk of post-ISIS chaos in Iraq casts new light on Canada's support for Kurds**

The threat of political chaos looms over the imminent defeat of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant in Mosul, fuelling fear of a dramatically different -- and deadly -- use for Canada's military support for Kurdish peshmerga forces. Much of the potential upheaval revolves around whether Iraq's disparate Sunni and Shia populations can finally set aside their differences and come together in some sort of reconciliation.

More Details:

<http://www.ctvnews.ca/canada/risk-of-post-isis-chaos-in-iraq-casts-new-light-on-canada-s-support-for-kurds-1.3311055>

- **Chemical Casualties Rise in Mosul; 41 Killed in Iraq**

Minister of Migration and Displacement Jassim Mohammed al-Jaff criticized United Nations' efforts in assisting civilians displaced by the fighting in Mosul. Over 50,000 people have fled western neighborhoods since fighting resumed on February 19, and the displacement camps are filling up rapidly. Brigadier General Rick Uribe, a deputy commanding general for coalition land forces, said on Saturday that Iraqi forces are progressing well during operations in western Mosul.

More Details:

<http://original.antiwar.com/updates/2017/03/04/chemical-casualties-rise-in-mosul-41-killed-in-iraq/>

- **UN: Alleged chemical weapon attack in Iraq would be a war crime**

Alleged chemical weapons attacks in Iraq would constitute a war crime if confirmed, the United Nations said in a statement on Saturday. "This is horrible," Lise Grande, the U.N. humanitarian coordinator in Iraq said. "If the alleged use of chemical weapons is confirmed, this is a serious

violation of international humanitarian law and a war crime, regardless of who the targets or the victims of the attacks are.”

More Details:

<http://thehill.com/policy/international/322361-un-warns-alleged-isis-chemical-weapons-attacks-would-be-war-crime-if>

- **Iraq: ISIL's Ring Leader Dismisses Iraqi Commanders in Mosul Battlefields**

Chief of ISIL terrorist group, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, has relieved the group's Iraqi commanders from their duties in Mosul, a local source disclosed on Saturday. The source in Nineveh province said that Al-Baghdadi has issued an order to dismiss all commanders who are Iraqi nationals as the final battle over West Mosul starts.

More Details:

<http://en.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13951214001239>

2. SYRIA

- **Shaaban, Mikdad, al-Shaar meet Deputy Foreign Minister of the Philippines**

Presidential Political and Media Advisor Bouthaina Shaaban met on Sunday Deputy Foreign Minister of the Philippines Jesus I. Yabes and the accompanying delegation. During the meeting, Shaaban hailed the fact that the Philippines has always maintained a good stance throughout the ongoing crisis in the country and has always been keen to send delegates to Syria to see the situation firsthand and not depend on what is circulated by Western media.

More Details:

<http://sana.sy/en/?p=101415>

- **Zarif: I Have Limited Authorities in Syria**

London, Riyadh- Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif admitted on Sunday that he lacked full authority to take decisions on the Syrian file, asserting that his ministry operates under the orders of the Supreme National Security Council that acts as a coordinator between the Iranian sides linked to the events in the war-torn country.

More Details:

<http://english.aawsat.com/2017/03/article55368724/zarif-limited-authorities-syria>

- **Astana to host new Syrian settlement talks in mid-March: FM**

The next international meeting on the Syrian crisis settlement, according to preliminary information, will take place in Astana on March 14-15, Foreign Minister Kairat Abdrakhmanov said on March 6.

More Details:

<http://akipress.com/news:589706/>

- **Amnestied militants in Syria join government forces**

Amnestied militants in Aleppo are siding with the Syrian army en masse, while others are returning to civilian life. They admit that they lay down arms despite threats from terrorists.

More Details:

<http://tass.com/world/934115>

- **Crashed Syrian plane's pilot in Turkish hospital**

A Syrian military pilot whose aircraft crashed in Turkey near the two countries' border is in hospital having been found after a nine-hour search, the Anadolu news agency said on Sunday.

More Details:

<http://aranews.net/2017/03/crashed-syrian-planes-pilot-turkish-hospital/>

- **Netanyahu to meet Putin about Iran's presence in Syria**

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Sunday he plans to meet with Russian President Vladimir Putin in Moscow this week about Iran's military presence in neighboring Syria after the civil war ends.

More Details:

http://www.upi.com/Top_News/World-News/2017/03/05/Netanyahu-to-meet-Putin-about-Irans-presence-in-Syria/2621488744925/?utm_source=sec&utm_campaign=sl&utm_medium=1

- **Daesh bombings kill over dozen in Syria's Aleppo province**

More than a dozen people have been killed and several others injured after members of the Daesh Takfiri terrorist group carried out two separate bomb attacks in Syria's northern province of Aleppo, PressTV reported.

More Details:

<http://en.trend.az/world/arab/2728474.html>

- **Ankara content with Syrian regime presence in Manbij if PYD withdraws**

Ankara seems content with the handover of the northern Syrian town of Manbij from the PKK's Syrian offshoot, the Democratic Union Party (PYD) to the Bashar Assad regime, as it has long asserted that the town belongs to Syrian Arabs and objecting the terrorist group's presence in the area.

More Details:

<https://www.dailysabah.com/war-on-terror/2017/03/06/ankara-content-with-syrian-regime-presence-in-manbij-if-pyd-withdraws>

- **Syrian refugees face fresh ordeal with cold, muddy camps**

The Cornish charity Shelterbox is part of a multi agency effort to help refugees who endured years of fighting in the Syrian city of Aleppo. Makeshift camps have been set up, but conditions are primitive. Normally, the charity sends aid in its distinctive green boxes. But this new aid effort, represents a departure from Shelterbox's normal practice.

More Details:

<http://www.itv.com/news/westcountry/2017-03-05/syrian-refugees-face-fresh-ordeal-with-cold-muddy-camps/>

3. IRAN

- **No positive change in Saudi political approaches: Iran FM**

Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif says Saudi Arabia has made no positive change in its political approaches and is still escalating tensions in the Middle East.

More Details:

<http://www.presstv.ir/Detail/2017/03/05/513117/Iran-Saudi-Arabia-Mohammad-Javad-Zarif-JCPOA>

- **Iran-Azerbaijan ties much-envied by enemies**

Leader of the Islamic Revolution has said no power would topple Republic of Azerbaijan as long as it relied on its own people.

More Details:

<http://en.mehrnews.com/news/124020/Iran-Azerbaijan-ties-much-envied-by-enemies>

- **Zarif, Ebtekar write to UN chief on dust storms**

Iran's environment chief Masoumeh Ebtekar announced on Sunday that she and Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif have written a letter to UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres on the dust storms which hit Iran once in a while.

More Details:

<http://www.tehrantimes.com/news/411667/Zarif-Ebtekar-write-to-UN-chief-on-dust-storms>

- **Iran, EU emphasize establishing peaceful nuclear co-op**

Iran and the European Union (EU) in a press statement on international nuclear cooperation called 'Expectations and Responsibilities' stressed on establishing peaceful nuclear cooperation.

More Details:

<http://www.irna.ir/en/News/82452810/>

- **Bahrain Claims Arresting Iran-Linked Militants**

Bahrain claimed on Saturday it had uncovered a 54-member Iran-linked militant group, suspected of involvement in attacks on security forces, including organizing a prison break in January.

More Details:

<https://financialtribune.com/articles/national/60861/bahrain-claims-arresting-iran-linked-militants>

- **Zanganeh: Iran ready to ship 100,000 bpd crude to South Africa**

Iran is ready to send 100,000 barrels of crude oil per day to South Africa as well as to purchase refinery shares in that country, said Oil Minister Bijan Namdar Zanganeh.

More Details:

<http://www.iran-daily.com/News/188772.html>

- **Afghanistan Violates Treaty with Iran on Border River**

In a move in violation of a 1973 treaty with Iran, Afghanistan has refused to supply its neighbor with share of water from the Hirmand River, which rises in Afghanistan and flows through eastern parts of Iran, according to Iran's Energy Ministry.

More Details:

<http://ifpnews.com/news/politics/foreign-policies/2017/03/afghanistan-violates-treaty-with-iran-on-border-river/>

- **Iran, France Mull Broader Transport Cooperation**

Iran and France are considering the expansion of mutual cooperation in the transport sector that has helped bilateral economic relations thrive after the signing of the landmark nuclear deal between Iran and world powers in July 2015, which led to the removal of sanctions in January 2016.

More Details:

<https://financialtribune.com/articles/domestic-economy/60856/iran-france-mull-broader-transport-cooperation>

- **Iran's light crude price exceeds \$53 pb**

The price of Iranian light crude oil surpassed \$53 per barrel in the week ending in February 24, according to a report released by Petroleum Ministry.

More Details:

<http://www.irna.ir/en/News/82453595/>

- **Iran conducts successful test of Russian S-300 missile system**

Iran conducted a successful test of its Russian made S-300 surface-to-air missile system.

More Details:

<http://uawire.org/news/iran-conducts-successful-test-of-russian-s-300-surface-to-air-missile-system#>

4. ISRAEL – PALESTINE

- **Palestinian gunman killed in clash with Israeli forces**

A Palestinian gunman fired at Israeli soldiers and military police during a raid in the occupied West Bank on Monday and the Israeli forces shot and killed the attacker in response, the army and police said in a statement.

More Details

http://www.reuters.com/article/us-israel-palestinians-idUSKBN16DOL1?feedType=RSS&feedName=worldNews&utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+Reuters%2FworldNews+%28Reuters+World+News%29&&rpc=401

- **No Israeli streets to be named after Arafat: Netanyahu**

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Sunday a street in an Arab-Israeli town cannot be named after the iconic Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat. Netanyahu was reacting to complaints by former Israeli soldiers about the name of a road in the northern town of Jatt that was named after the Palestinian leader.

More Details

<http://aa.com.tr/en/middle-east/no-israeli-streets-to-be-named-after-arafat-netanyahu/764433>

- **Palestinian Beaten and Detained at Al Aqsa Mosque**

Israeli occupation police beat and abducted, on Sunday morning, a Palestinian citizen after he was beaten by Jewish settlers at Al-Aqsa Mosque. An eyewitness said, according to Days of Palestine, that Jewish Israeli settlers attacked a Palestinian man while he was entering through the Lion's Gate.

More Details

<http://imemc.org/article/palestinian-beaten-and-detained-at-al-aqsa-mosque/>

- **No Arafat Street will be allowed in Israel, Netanyahu says**

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu vowed on Sunday not to allow a street in a Palestinian Israeli town to be named after late Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat, promising new legislation if needed. The town of Jatt recently inaugurated Yasser Arafat Street in honour of the former Palestinian president who is viewed as a hero among Palestinians and many Palestinian Israelis.

More Details

<http://www.middleeasteye.net/news/no-arafat-street-will-be-allowed-israel-netanyahu-says-1117088267>

- **Palestine's Fatah tells US Congress an embassy move to Jerusalem will 'explode the situation' in all MENA**

Fatah spokesperson Ziad Khalil Abu Zayyad warned that relocating the US embassy in Tel Aviv to Jerusalem would "explode the situation" in the entire Middle East and North Africa region, in response to a US congressional delegation that reportedly arrived to Israel aiming to study the possibility of the move.

More Details

<http://www.albawaba.com/news/palestine%E2%80%99s-fatah-tells-us-congress-embassy-move-jerusalem-will-%E2%80%98explode-situation%E2%80%99-all-mena-94>

- **What happens to Palestinian prisoners when they are released?**

In February 1969, Rasmeh Odeh murdered two Hebrew University students and injured nine other people. Leon Kaner was 21 and Edward Jaffe was 22 when they were murdered in a Jerusalem supermarket. Odeh set bombs in coffee cans that exploded in the grocery, killing the two young men and injuring nine other people.

More Details

<http://blogs.timesofisrael.com/what-happens-to-palestinian-prisoners-when-they-are-released/>

- **Beersheba Bedouin Market to be Closed, Palestinians and Jews Protest**

Dozens of Palestinian and Jewish citizens of Israel protested in front of the municipality of Beersheba, on Sunday, against the mayor's decision to close the city's Bedouin market. Mayor Ruvik Danilovich decided to close Beersheba's traditional Bedouin market, which had been in operation for some 120 years, by the end of the month.

More Details

<http://imemc.org/article/beersheba-bedouin-market-to-be-closed-palestinians-and-jews-protest/>

- **Lieberman rejects idea of Israeli sovereignty in West Bank**

Minister of Defense Avigdor Lieberman asserted on Monday that extending Israeli sovereignty over the West Bank would be a mistake and lead to a diplomatic crisis with the United States and the Trump administration.

More Details:

<http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-4931262,00.html>

- **Israelis, Palestinians and internationals share dorms and negotiate peace**

Israeli and Palestinian officials haven't held direct peace talks since 2014, but last week in Kfar Hayarok, just north of Tel Aviv, Israelis, Palestinians and internationals not only sat for face-to-face peace talks but giggled over dinner. Next weekend they will participate in a biweekly dance party.

More Details:

<http://www.jpost.com/Arab-Israeli-Conflict/Israelis-Palestinians-and-internationals-share-dorms-and-negotiate-peace-483213>

- **Committee: Israel fined Palestinian minors a combined \$15,400 in February**

Israeli courts fined Palestinian minors imprisoned in the Ofer detention center a total of 57,000 shekels (\$15,420) in February alone, the Palestinian Committee of Prisoners' Affairs said on Sunday, adding that at least 49 had been detained in February. Committee lawyer Luay Akka said that of at least 49 Palestinian minors who were imprisoned in February and taken to Ofer, 27 of them were detained during home raids, nine in the streets, five after being summoned for interrogation, four at checkpoints, and four in Israel for not having permits.

More Details:

<http://www.maannews.com/Content.aspx?id=775801>

5. JORDAN and LEBANON

- **Jordan: Executions Won't End Terror Attacks, Murder**

Jordan joined a worrying regional trend towards increasing executions when it hanged 15 Jordanian men on March 4, 2017, Human Rights Watch said today. Those executed included 10 convicted in six terrorist attacks between 2003 and 2016, and five convicted in murder cases. The official government news agency, Petra News, announced that authorities had executed the men inside Suwaqa prison, 70 kilometers south of Amman.

More Details

<https://www.hrw.org/news/2017/03/05/jordan-executions-wont-end-terror-attacks-murder>

- **Jordan Executes 15 Terrorists**

Jordan executed 15 people on Saturday morning, including 10 convicted on terrorism charges, according to government spokesman Mohammad al-Momani. Momani told state media that those executed included those involved in the "Irbid terror cell", and the terror attack against the General Intelligence Department office in Baqaa refugee camp.

More Details

<http://english.aawsat.com/2017/03/article55368710/jordan-executes-15-terrorists>

- **Two Jordan hotels sign MoU for tourism development**

In a move to develop the tourism and economic sectors, two hotels in Jordan - Al Manara, a Luxury Collection hotel and the Westin Saraya Aqaba Hotel - have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with The United States Agency for International Development (Usaid)

More Details

http://www.tradearabia.com/news/TTN_321531.html

- **Report: Saudi King Trip to Lebanon Set Aside over Aoun's Pro-Hizbullah Remarks**

Saudi King Salman bin Abdul Aziz has canceled a scheduled trip to Lebanon this month amid reports claiming that statements made by President Michel Aoun about Hizbullah's arms were to blame, media reports said on Monday. The King had plans to visit Lebanon in March to "interpret the Saudi leadership's desire in helping the Lebanese state and encourage it to fulfill its Arab and international obligations, and the settlement that ended the presidential vacuum," said An Nahar daily.

More Details

<http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/226490-report-saudi-king-cancels-visit-to-lebanon>

- **Machnouk: Our loyalty to Lebanon and Arabism are steady**

Interior and Municipalities Minister, Nouhad Machnouk, said on Sunday that his loyalty to Lebanon and to Arabism were constant and would never be altered by takifiris or by those who call for division.

More Details

<http://nna-leb.gov.lb/en/show-news/76148/Machnouk-Our-loyalty-to-Lebanon-and-Arabism-are-steady>

- **Mashnouq Says Hariri to Maintain Sunni Leadership in Any Elections**

Interior Minister Nouhad al-Mashnouq stressed Sunday that Prime Minister and al-Mustaqbal Movement leader Saad Hariri will maintain his leadership of the Sunni community in Lebanon in any parliamentary elections. "I was one of those calling for confrontation, but PM Hariri told me, through his wisdom, that he will not accept that Lebanon suffer what Syria is suffering," Mashnouq told a breakfast banquet that was thrown in his honor by Beirut dignitary Ahmed Naji Fares.

More Details

<http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/226456-mashnouq-says-hariri-to-maintain-sunni-leadership-in-any-elections>

- **Bassil during inauguration of Batroun new municipality building: Lebanon cannot be built on 60's law**

Minister of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates, Gebran Bassil, said on Sunday during the inauguration of the new municipality palace of Batroun that the 60's electoral law cannot be adopted in the upcoming elections insisting that "Lebanon cannot be built based on the 60's law."

More Details

<http://nna-leb.gov.lb/en/show-news/76138/Bassil-during-inauguration-of-Batroun-new-municipality-building-Lebanon-cannot-be-built-on-60-39-law>

- **Lebanese expats, GCC nationals urged to visit Lebanon ...”security situation is “under control”**

Lebanon’s Interior Minister Nouhad Mashnouk said Saturday that the security situation is “under control” and for this reason the Lebanese expats and Arab nationals shouldn’t anymore be reluctant because of fear to visit .

More Details

<http://yalibnan.com/2017/03/05/lebanese-expats-gcc-nationals-urged-to-visit-lebanon-security-situation-is-under-control/>

- **Alloush Warns: Vacuum means Constituent Assembly and Legalization of Hezbollah arms**

“Vacuum in the legislative authority has never happened throughout Lebanon’s modern history, and should it happen this time, it would mean heading to a constituent assembly which we have been trying to avoid. Everyone would then lose, because change would affect the entire political structure in Lebanon,” Alloush told the Saudi daily Asharq al-Awsat in remarks published Sunday.

More Details

<http://yalibnan.com/2017/03/05/alloush-warns-that-vacuum-means-constituent-assembly-which-means-legalization-of-hezbollah-arms/>

6. ARABIAN PENINSULA AND THE GULF OF BASRA

- **Saudi Arabia's Military Base Damaged in Yemen's Zalzal-2 Missile Attack**

The Yemeni army and popular forces damaged a Saudi military base in the Southern part of the kingdom in a missile attack.

More Details:

<http://en.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13951216000432>

- **Can Iran and Saudi Arabia reach agreement over Hajj dispute?**

Iran said on Sunday there had been a progress in talks with Saudi Arabia on allowing Iranian citizens to join this year's Hajj, despite some remaining issues.

More Details:

<http://realiran.org/can-iran-and-saudi-arabia-reach-agreement-over-hajj-dispute/>

- **Yemen army liberates more areas**

Yemen National Army units have liberated more areas in Maqbanah District, west of Taiz City, from the rebel Houthi group and captured Awadh Al Brak, the second-in-command of the group in the district.

More Details:

<http://gulftoday.ae/portal/2710dd8e-26d3-4e4a-8673-51a975c52271.aspx>

- **Yemen security officials say al-Qaida kills 11 soldiers**

Yemeni security officials say that al-Qaida militants have killed 11 soldiers in two separate attacks.

More Details:

<http://www.newindianexpress.com/world/2017/mar/06/yemen-security-officials-say-al-qaida-kills-11-soldiers-1578035.html>

- **Qatar Foreign Minister meets New Zealand counterpart**

The Qatari Foreign Minister, Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al-Thani, and the New Zealand Foreign Minister, Murray McCully, have discussed bilateral relations and ways of boosting them, especially in the fields of economy and investment.

More Details:

<http://wam.ae/en/details/1395302601153>

- **UAE-Qatar sign MoU on residency, foreigners' Affairs**

The UAE and Qatar Ministries of Interior, have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on residency and foreigners' affairs on the sidelines of the First UAE-Qatar Joint Security Committee Meeting, held recently in the Qatari capital, Doha.

More Details:

<http://gulftoday.ae/portal/04617ddf-719e-41d6-b712-c38a9fe7be3b.aspx>

- **Buzz Aldrin: UAE can be vital part of space coalition**

The UAE can become a vital part of a space exploration coalition of nations along with new spacefaring countries like India and South Korea, renowned American astronaut, Buzz Aldrin, said in the capital on Sunday.

More Details:

<http://gulfnews.com/news/uae/government/buzz-aldrin-uae-can-be-vital-part-of-space-coalition-1.1988713>

- **Bahrain's Nogaholding plans over \$7B of oil and gas investments into 2022**

Nogaholding, the investment arm of Bahrain's National Oil and Gas Authority (Noga), has substantial expansion plans and expects to invest in excess of \$7 billion across several separate ventures in the next five years, says Bahrain's Minister of Oil, Shaikh Mohammed bin Khalifa Al Khalifa, in an interview with Oil & Gas News (OGN).

More Details:

<http://www.albawaba.com/business/bhains-nogaholding-plans-over-7b-oil-and-gas-investments-2022-946030>

- **Bahrain's Parliament Approves Military Trials for Civilians**

Bahrain's Parliament approved a constitutional change on Sunday that will allow military courts to try civilians, the kingdom's latest move in a mounting crackdown on dissent.

More Details:

https://www.nytimes.com/2017/03/05/world/bhains-parliament-approves-military-trials-for-civilians.html?_r=0

- **Oman's \$5B bond sale 'a global vote of confidence': Finance Minister**

A global vote of confidence in Oman's future has been given by international investors who ploughed billions of dollars into the future of the Sultanate.

More Details:

<http://www.albawaba.com/business/omans-5b-bond-sale-global-vote-confidence-finance-minister-946013>

7. EGYPT

- **We seek to modernise the national electricity grid: Kaeser**

The German company Siemens is targeting to inaugurate a centre in Suez for the maintenance of power plants and equipment and for training workers at a value of €100m this year, said Joe Kaeser, CEO of Siemens, during his interview with Daily News Egypt. This is Kaeser's first interview after attending the opening of the power plants in Beni Suef, Borollos, and the New Administrative Capital, in the presence of President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi and German chancellor Angela Merkel.

More Details

<http://www.dailynewsegypt.com/2017/03/06/seek-modernise-national-electricity-grid-kaeser/>

- **Egypt's FM in Brussels to meet European Union counterparts**

Egypt's Minister of Foreign Affairs Sameh Shoukry is in Brussels Sunday on a one-day visit where he is scheduled to meet with the 28 foreign ministers of the European Union, a ministry statement read.

More Details

<http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/64/259347/-.aspx>

- **Egyptian exports jump by 25% in January: trade minister**

Non-petroleum exports accounted for US\$1.66 billion in January, compared to US\$1.327 billion in January 2016, an increase of 25 percent, said Trade and Industry Minister Tareq Qabil. The total exports volume decline in December by 1.3 percent, according to a statement issued by the Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS) on Sunday.

More Details

<http://www.egyptindependent.com//news/egyptian-exports-jump-25-january-trade-minister>

- **Germany grants Egypt \$500M for economic development and SME support**

Germany has offered Egypt \$500 million to support its economic programme and medium-sized and small businesses, the Egyptian ministry of investment and international cooperation said on Friday. Germany has offered Egypt \$500 million to support its economic programme and medium-sized and small businesses, the Egyptian ministry of investment and international cooperation said on Friday.

More Details

<http://www.albawaba.com/business/germany-grants-egypt-500m-economic-development-and-sme-support-945708>

- **Units for overseas Egyptians should be attractive: experts**

The Ministry of Housing, Utilities, and Urban Communities is to establish housing units for Egyptians who work outside of Egypt, in order to help the country attract foreign currencies and also help the overseas Egyptians to have houses that link them to their country.

More Details

<http://www.dailynewsegypt.com/2017/03/06/617334/>

- **Four suspected militants killed in Egypt shootout**

Egyptian police have killed four suspected hardliner militants believed to have been planning a “major attack” in a shootout near Cairo, the interior ministry said. The men were killed after opening fire on security forces who approached them in Giza, on the southwestern edge of the Egyptian capital Cairo, where they were meeting to plan an attack, the ministry said in a statement.

More Details

<http://gulftoday.ae/portal/f1b773b7-1e54-49b6-ae4e-c5a7099fad83.aspx>

- **Social Solidarity Minister celebrates Women’s Day at EGX, says optimistic about 2017**

Social Solidarity Minister Ghada Wali opened the stock market session on Sunday, which marks International Women’s Day, in a ceremony organized by the Egyptian Exchange (EGX) for the third year in row. Several female MPs and businesswomen attended.

More Details

<http://www.egyptindependent.com//news/social-solidarity-minister-celebrates-women-s-day-egx-says-optimistic-about-2017>

- **Multinational efforts restore Egypt's Museum of Islamic Art**

In 2014, a car bomb destroyed the Egyptian Museum of Islamic Art. Then this happened: The United Arab Emirates helped rebuild the interior of the building. The Italian government helped to design and purchase new display cases and to train curators. The U.S. and Swiss governments worked with local organizations to repair the damaged facade of the building.

More Details

<http://www.albawaba.com/business/multinational-efforts-restore-egypts-museum-islamic-art-945749>

- **Egyptian journalist Ibrahim Eissa released on bail on 'insulting parliament' charges**

A Cairo appeals prosecution ordered on Sunday the release on bail of high-profile journalist and TV personality Ibrahim Eissa after a case was filed against him by parliament accusing him of “insulting and mocking parliament.”

More Details

<http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/64/259355/-.aspx>

- **Russia, Egypt to Finalize 17 Intergovernmental Agreements – Russian Lawmaker**

Russia and Egypt have agreed to finalize together a package of 17 intergovernmental agreements, Konstantin Kosachev, the chairman of the upper house of Russian parliament's foreign affairs committee, said on Sunday.

More Details

<https://sputniknews.com/world/201703051051279960-russia-egypt-kosachev-agreement/>

8. NORTH AFRICA

- **Algerian parties struggle to find women candidates**

Algerian law requires the next parliament to be made up of 30 per cent women — but political parties across the spectrum have struggled to come up with enough female candidates to fill the quota.

More details:

<http://gulftoday.ae/portal/521fac3e-7d70-48f6-abc0-8cffd2160f1c.aspx>

- **Algeria, Tunisia committed to finding political, consensual solution to Libyan crisis**

Minister of Maghreb Affairs, African Union and Arab League Abdelkader Messahel and Tunisian Foreign Minister Khemaies Jhinaoui reaffirmed, Sunday in Algiers, the commitment of their two countries to finding a political and consensual solution to the crisis in Libya, stressing the need to promote the inter-Libyan dialogue.

More details:

<http://en.aps.dz/algeria/17132-algeria,-tunisia-committed-to-finding-political,-consensual-solution-to-libyan-crisis>

- **Oil terminals attack boosts HoR rejection of the LPA**

Since the start of the Benghazi Defence Brigades assault on the oil crescent terminals, the number of House of Representatives members to come out against the Libyan Political Agreement has more than doubled.

More details:

<https://www.libyaherald.com/2017/03/05/oil-terminals-attack-boosts-hor-rejection-of-the-lpa/>

- **Libyan Parliament Announces Collapse of Political Dialogue**

The Libyan dialogue collapsed on Saturday after the internationally-recognized parliament announced boycotting it, threatening political efforts to reach a peaceful settlement for the Libyan crisis.

More details:

<http://english.aawsat.com/2017/03/article55368691/libyan-parliament-announces-collapse-political-dialogue>

- **Morocco: PM Struggles to Form New Government - 5 Months after Parliamentary Elections**

Nearly five months after the parliamentary elections in Morocco, the re-appointed Prime Minister Abdelilah Benkirane is still struggling to form a new government.

More details:

<http://www.bernama.com/bernama/v8/wn/newsworld.php?id=1335153>

- **Morocco paves way for Islamic finance industry**

Morocco's central bank has approved the use of five types of Islamic banking transaction, giving a final regulatory nod for the country to launch an Islamic finance industry.

More details:

<http://www.arabnews.com/node/1063786/business-economy>

- **Morocco on rocky path to form new government**

Nearly five months after the parliamentary elections in Morocco, the re-appointed Islamist Prime Minister Abdelilah Benkirane is still struggling to form a new government.

More details:

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-03/06/c_136104972.htm

- **In Exchange of Tightening Borders, Spain Promises Support for Morocco Against EU**

Spain has promised to support Morocco before the European Union (EU) in exchange for increased security on the Moroccan borders of Ceuta and Melilla in a recent diplomatic agreement between the two countries.

More details:

<https://www.moroccoworldnews.com/2017/03/210121/in-exchange-of-tightening-borders-spain-promises-support-for-morocco-against-eu/>

- **Factions fight for two Libyan oil terminals**

Haftar's LNA launches air strikes in attempt to regain control of Es Sider and Ras Lanuf ports seized by BDB fighters.

More details:

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/03/factions-fight-libyan-oil-terminals-170305213126297.html>

- **King Mohammed VI facing the King's Dilemma: Brookings Institute**

An analysis of the current political situation in Morocco, run on the Brookings Institute, named "Think Tank of the Year" in 2015, said that "six years after the Arab uprisings, Moroccan King Mohammed VI faces his own version of the King's Dilemma."

More details:

<http://themoroccantimes.com/2017/03/22120/king-mohammed-vi-facing-the-kings-dilemma-brooking-institute>

9. AFGHANISTAN – PAKISTAN

- **Security pact with US was signed because of Taliban’s war and horror: Ghani**

President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani has said the Afghan government was forced to sign a security pact with the United States because of the war and horror of the Taliban group.

More details:

<http://www.khaama.com/security-pact-with-us-was-signed-because-of-talibans-war-and-horror-ghani-02337>

- **Afghan family with US visas unlawfully detained at airport for several days**

U.S. agents unlawfully detained an Afghan family of five at Los Angeles International Airport and have been holding them for several days in California, according to legal papers filed in federal court in California by human rights lawyers.

More details:

<http://uk.businessinsider.com/r-afghan-family-with-us-visas-detained-at-los-angeles-airport-filing-2017-3>

- **Durand Line will remain line; Pakistan has no legal authority to dictate term on Durand Line: Karzai**

Reacting to the merger of Federally Administered Tribal Area (FATA) with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the former President Hamid Karzai has said that the government of Pakistan has no legal authority to dictate terms on the Durand Line, a de facto border between the two states.

More details:

<http://afghanistantimes.af/durand-line-will-remain-line-pakistan-has-no-legal-authority-to-dictate-term-on-durand-line-karzai/>

- **Sindh CM reveals astonishing security lapses around Sehwan blast**

Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah on Monday briefed the provincial assembly on the details of the report carried out on the Sehwan blast which killed nearly 100 people.

More details:

<http://dailytimes.com.pk/pakistan/06-Mar-17/sindh-cm-reveals-astonishing-security-lapses-around-sehwan-blast>

- **PM Nawaz Sharif expresses grief over Mohmand attack**

Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif on Monday that Pakistan would become stronger and stronger “because our men in uniform are vigilant at our borders and in urban centres”.

More details:

<http://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2017/03/06/pm-nawaz-sharif-expresses-grief-over-mohmand-attack-2/>

- **PML-Q to prepare its own draft of military courts bill**

The opposition has further split over the issue of revival of military courts as a group of four parties, led by the Pakistan Muslim League-Quaid (PML-Q), has decided to prepare its own draft of the 23rd constitutional amendment bill.

More details:

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1318709/pml-q-to-prepare-its-own-draft-of-military-courts-bill>

- **Govt. to work on Badakhshan civil, military organizations, CE**

Dr. Abdullah Abdullah, Chief Executive of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan met with the head and members of the provincial council of Badakhshan and discussed on the province’s people problems, his office said in a statement the other day.

More details:

<http://thekabultimes.gov.af/index.php/newsnational/13249-govt-to-work-on-badakhshan-civil-military-organizations-ce.html>

- **Turkey to take over FETO-linked Afghan Turk schools**

Kabul government starts process to hand over 16 schools established by Fetullah Terrorist Organization in the country.

More details:

<http://aa.com.tr/en/asia-pacific/turkey-to-take-over-feto-linked-afghan-turk-schools/764423>

- **Taliban Controls 40% of Kunduz: Police Official**

The armed Taliban group controls forty percent of the territory of Kunduz province, the governor of the province said.

More details:

<http://ariananews.af/taliban-controls-40-of-kunduz-police-official/>

10.TURKEY AND THE MIDDLE EAST

- **Turkey: 'PYD represents Kurds in Syria' a huge lie**

Turkish Defense Minister Fikri Isik on Saturday rejected all claims that PKK-affiliated PYD group represents Kurdish people in Syria, calling the claims as "a huge lie". Speaking to reporters in the northwestern province of Kocaeli, Isik said Turkey was aware of the efforts of the PYD to create territorial sovereignty in the region, and would not allow such a thing. "It is a huge lie that the PYD represents Kurds in the region. The most murderous acts against the Kurds in Syria are now committed by the PYD," Isik said.

More Details:

<http://www.worldbulletin.net/turkey/185750/turkey-pyd-represents-kurds-in-syria-a-huge-lie>

- **Turkish jets kill 11 PKK terrorists in Iraq's Qandil**

At least 11 PKK terrorists were killed in airstrikes carried out by Turkish jets in northern Iraq's Qandil Mountains on Tuesday, the Turkish military announced Sunday. In a statement, the Turkish Armed Forces said the airstrikes took place in northern Iraq's Qandil Mountains on Tuesday. The army forces launched the operation immediately after intelligence was received. The airstrikes also destroyed 16 targets including shelters, hiding places and caves, it added.

More Details:

<http://aa.com.tr/en/middle-east/turkish-jets-kill-11-pkk-terrorists-in-iraqs-qandil/764341>

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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