



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

- **Kurdish Delegation to Head To Baghdad**

A joint political delegation from the Kurdistan region is heading to Baghdad soon to engage in dialogue with the political parties. The website of the PUK quoted Saadi Ahmed, member of the political bureau of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, as saying: "The Kurds could declare an independent state rather than federal in 1991".

More Details:

http://www.ninanews.com/News_Details.aspx?hGIWTEFVOnBGzSR5H7mhog%253d%253d

- **Iraqi army kills 16 IS militants, destroys 2 car bombs near Anbar**

The Command of the Army's 7th brigade in Anbar informed on Sunday, that 16 members of the Islamic State were killed, and two car bombs belonging to the group were destroyed, during a security operation, west of the province. The Command said in a press statement, "Forces from the army's 7th brigade and Jazeera Operations, Baked by al-Hashd al-Ashaeri and the international coalition air force, carried out a security operation in the desert area between Haditha and Anah (210 km west of Ramadi)."

More Details:

<http://www.iraqinews.com/iraq-war/iraqi-army-kills-16-militants-destroys-2-car-bombs-near-anbar/>

- **Tel Afar Operation Imminent: Official**

A military operation to liberate Tel Afar from Islamic State (IS) will be launched very soon with Kurdish Peshmerga forces taking part in the mission, said a Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) official. Citing the party's official in Zummar, KDP website said Hashd al-Shaabi commander Hadi al-Ameri discussed the operation with Kurdish Peshmerga forces during his recent visit to Sinjar. "An agreement has been reached to begin the process of liberating Tel Afar," the official revealed.

More Details:

<http://www.basnews.com/index.php/en/news/iraq/328446>

- **UN envoy says Islamic State will be routed from Iraq soon**

The U.N. envoy for Iraq says military operations to liberate Iraq from the Islamic State extremist group will be coming to an end "in the rather short foreseeable future." Jan Kubis told the U.N. Security Council Thursday that "the days of the so-called ISIS are counted," using one of the acronyms for the militant group.

More Details:

http://www.pukmedia.com/EN/EN_Direje.aspx?Jimare=39635

- **Iraq says Ruling against Trump Travel Ban is 'Move in Right Direction'**

Iraq expresses satisfaction on Sunday with a US appeals court ruling against a travel ban imposed by US President Donald Trump, a government spokesman said. The ruling given late on Saturday denied a request from the US Department of Justice to immediately restore Trump's order, which a judge in Washington State had blocked on Friday.

More Details:

<http://www.jpost.com/Breaking-News/Iraq-says-ruling-against-Trump-travel-ban-is-move-in-right-direction-480608>

- **The forgotten generations: Palestinian refugees in Iraq**

Inside Baharka IDP Camp, a government-run refugee camp that provides emergency shelter for over 4,000 internally displaced people, 18 Palestinian families live in a cluster of makeshift homes. Located near the Kurdish city of Erbil, the camp is managed by the Barzani Charity Foundation and the Erbil Refugee Council. Born and raised in Baghdad, 30-year-old Palestinian Yahia Mahmoud has lived in Baharka camp for over two years. Without permission to work, travel or build a life as a citizen, and with nowhere else to go, Mahmoud and his family, like other Palestinian refugees in Iraq, are trapped in a cycle of isolation, discrimination and continual displacement.

More Details:

<http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/inpictures/2017/01/forgotten-generations-palestinian-refugees-iraq-170131083424241.html>

- **Family finds local help after fleeing Iraq**

Seeing his barber shop burned because he was the wrong religion was bad enough, but when his 5-year-old daughter was kidnapped, Odai Alaaneri knew it was time to leave his native Iraq. Thankfully, he and his wife were able to get their daughter back the same day in the summer of 2012, after the town's faith leaders negotiated her release.

More Details:

<http://www.crainsdetroit.com/article/20170205/NEWS/170209899/family-finds-local-help-after-fleeing-iraq>

- **US dividing Iraq from Syria with border air strikes against IS**

The United States has recently been targeting Islamic State militants in the desert region on the Iraq-Syria border in an effort to re-separate the two countries. The campaign has resulted in the killing of civilian farmers and nomads. Pan-Arab daily al-Araby al-Jadeed reported that "more than 50 air raids were carried out by international coalition forces during the past eight days on desert border areas, on cities and areas located on the Euphrates River".

More Details:

<http://www.middleeasteye.net/news/us-airstrikes-re-separating-iraq-syria-border-weakening-killing-civilians-2098574036>

- **NATO begins IED training course in Iraq**

NATO on Sunday confirmed the start of a new training program in Iraq to teach Iraqi security forces how to handle the threat of Improvised Explosive Devices (IED). The intergovernmental military alliance revealed nearly 30 enlisted soldiers were involved in the first five-week course.

More Details:

<http://www.kurdistan24.net/en/news/8347c6af-c994-4267-9774-f516721b2dcb/NATO-begins-IED-training-course-in-Iraq>

- **Three Soldiers Killed in Attacks in Western Iraq**

Three Iraqi soldiers were killed and ten members of the security forces were injured today in three attacks perpetrated in the western province of Diyala, security sources said. According to the report, three soldiers were killed and six were wounded in the most serious attack due to the simultaneous explosion of several car bombs against a patrol in the town of Majisa, 30 kilometers northeast of Baqubah, and the provincial capital.

More Details:

<http://www.plenglish.com/index.php?o=rn&id=8912&SEO=three-soldiers-killed-in-attacks-in-western-iraq>

- **Iraq welcomes ruling against Trump ban**

Iraq is satisfied with a US appeals court ruling against a travel ban imposed by US President Donald Trump, a government spokesman said on Sunday. The ruling given late on Saturday denied a request from the US Department of Justice to immediately restore Trump's order, which a judge in Washington State had blocked on Friday.

More Details:

<http://gulftoday.ae/portal/1891dfa2-b3f9-44fa-bc3e-40222994c235.aspx>

- **Iraq's South Oil Exports Decline**

Iraq's southern crude oil exports dropped in January from a record high a month before as the country implements output cuts agreed by OPEC and other major producers to curb the global glut. The nation's exports decreased 187,000 barrels a day to 3.323 million barrels a day in January from the previous month, according to a person familiar with the matter, who did not want to be identified because the data is not public, Bloomberg reported.

More Details:

<https://financialtribune.com/articles/energy/58984/iraq-s-south-oil-exports-decline>

- **Iraq calls for support to fight ISIS' bomb-dropping drones**

The Iraqi Security Forces on Sunday called on the US-led coalition to provide them with anti-drone weapons to protect their troops from Islamic State's (ISIS) bomb-dropping drones in the Mosul operation. In the meantime, the US-led coalition said in a statement that they have sent a DroneDefender and additional advanced anti-drone systems in support of the Iraqi forces fighting ISIS in Mosul, in Iraq's northwestern Nineveh Governorate.

More Details:

<http://aranews.net/2017/02/iraq-calls-support-fight-isis-bomb-dropping-drones/>

- **Iraq sends reinforcements ahead of new push against IS in Mosul**

Large reinforcement troops have been dispatched near the southern edges of Mosul, preparing for an imminent push into the last Islamic State (IS) stronghold in the western side of Mosul, the Iraqi military said on Sunday. "We have large reinforcement troops with units of armored vehicles and artillery arriving recently near the Abu Saif Hills just south of Mosul to bolster the military situation," an army source told Xinhua on condition of anonymity.

More Details:

http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/world/2017-02/05/content_28107583.htm

- **Multiple Attacks in Diyala Province; 44 Killed in Iraq**

About 50,000 residents have returned from displacement camps to Mosul. A hospital and 12 health centers have opened to accommodate them. Military reinforcements are arriving at the southern and western edges of Mosul in preparation for the next phase of the liberation of the city. At least 44 were killed and 24 more were wounded.

More Details:

<http://original.antiwar.com/updates/2017/02/05/multiple-attacks-in-diyala-province-44-killed-in-iraq/>

- **Velayati calls on UN to stop foreign intervention in Iraq**

Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General (SRSG) for Iraq, Ján Kubiš, conferred on regional developments with senior adviser to Iran’s Leader Ali Akbar Velayati on Sun. in Tehran. During the meeting, Ali Akbar Velayati expressed regret over foreign intervention in regional affairs, adding “certain foreign countries and their reactionary allies in the region are creating conflict and division which need to be confronted with serious resolve. The United Nations’ efforts can prove to be very effective in this respect,” Ali Akbar Velayati said during the meeting with Ján Kubiš.

More Details:

<http://en.mehrnews.com/news/123302/Velayati-calls-on-UN-to-stop-foreign-intervention-in-Iraq>

2. SYRIA

- **Dewinter: Many states practiced erroneous policies towards Syria, Europe must become aware of the threat of terrorists**

The head of the Belgian delegation currently visiting Syria, member of Belgium’s Federal Parliament Filip Dewinter, said that the delegation’s members will pressure the Belgian Parliament and the international organizations in which they work to lift the economic embargo imposed on Syria, noting that they witnessed during their visits to hospitals and housing centers that the embargo is affecting the Syrian people directly.

More Details:

<http://sana.sy/en/?p=99569>

- **House Speaker Ryan Backs Idea of Sending More US Troops to Syria to Crush Daesh**

Ryan made the remarks in his interview with the NBC News channel, speaking about the plan proposed by US Defense Secretary James Mattis, which implies sending extra troops to Syria to defeat Daesh, a terrorist group outlawed in Russia, the United States and other countries.

More Details:

<https://sputniknews.com/us/201702061050379344-ryan-troops-syria-daesh/>

- **13 Daesh terrorists killed, 8 injured by Turkish shelling, airstrikes in n. Syria**

Thirteen Daesh terrorists have been killed, eight others have been injured by airstrikes and shelling carried out as part of Turkey's Operation Euphrates Shield, the military said in a statement on Monday.

More Details:

<http://www.dailysabah.com/war-on-terror/2017/02/06/13-daesh-terrorists-killed-8-injured-by-turkish-shelling-airstrikes-in-n-syria>

- **Trilateral meeting on Syria begins in Astana**

A meeting of the joint task force of Russia, Turkey and Iran on Syrian ceasefire regime monitoring started in Astana, with experts from the United Nations and Jordan participating in the talks, an informed source told Sputnik on Monday.

More Details:

<http://en.mehrnews.com/news/123303/Trilateral-meeting-on-Syria-begins-in-Astana>

- **Russia Sends 12 Tonnes of Food to Syria**

In recent times, Russia has distributed more than 12 tonnes of food to civilian victims of the war in Aleppo and the Shinshar village in Homs. The humanitarian aid was provided through the Russian Reconciliation Centre. "[Some] 3,2 tonnes of food, 3,000 portions of hot meals and 1850 food packages [have been] distributed among the civilians," a statement released by the Center said, adding that the total mass of the distributed food was 12,3 tonnes.

More Details:

<http://www.bernama.com/bernama/v8/wn/newsworld.php?id=1326671>

- **China to donate humanitarian aid to Syria**

The Chinese Embassy and the Syrian Planning and International Cooperation Commission (ICC) signed two agreements on Sunday, under which China will provide two batches of humanitarian aid to the Syrian government worth 16 million U.S. dollars.

More Details:

http://www.china.org.cn/world/2017-02/05/content_40227384.htm

- **U.S. coalition bombs Islamic State-held north Syria town near Euphrates Dam**

U.S-led coalition planes bombed an Islamic State-controlled town near the Euphrates Dam in northern Syria a day after the launch of a new phase of a campaign to capture the militants' stronghold of Raqqa, activists and the militants said on Sunday.

More Details:

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2017/02/06/world/u-s-coalition-bombs-islamic-state-held-north-syria-town-near-euphrates-dam/#.WJgejdSLSmU>

- **Syria: Kurdish-Led SDF Continues to Advance against ISIL Northeast of Raqqa City**

The Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) continued the third phase of their Euphrates Rage Operation and advanced against ISIL, taking control over two villages and a large farm.

More Details:

<http://en.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13951117001486>

- **Iran, Russia Discuss Solution to Syria Crisis**

Secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council Ali Shamkhani and Alexander Lavrentiev, Russian President Vladimir Putin's envoy on Syrian affairs, discussed efforts aimed at putting an end to the nearly six-year-old conflict gripping the Arab country.

More Details:

<https://financialtribune.com/articles/national/58974/iran-russia-discuss-solution-to-syria-crisis>

- **Syrian forces retake control of strategic town near Aleppo**

Syrian forces have managed to retake control of a strategic town near the city of Aleppo in the northern part of the Arab country.

More Details:

<http://www.presstv.com/Detail/2017/02/05/509276/Syrian-forces-Um-Aleppo>

3. IRAN

- **Iranian Advisor Killed West of Mosul**

Iran's Revolutionary Guards confirmed on Sunday that Kheirallah Ahmadi Far, one of its commanders linked to the Nabi al-Akram Corps, was killed during battles with ISIS near the Iraqi city of Tal Afar west of Mosul.

More Details:

<http://english.aawsat.com/2017/02/article55366917/iranian-advisor-killed-west-mosul>

- **Iran: Final batch of 149 tons of "yellow cake" expected on Tuesday**

The head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran says his country will receive the final batch of a shipment of 149 tons of natural uranium on Tuesday.

More Details:

<http://www.presstv.ir/Detail/2017/02/06/509292/iran-aeoi-natural-uranium-salehi>

- **Oil edges up on threat of US issuing new Iran sanctions**

Oil prices edged up last Friday on news that US President Donald Trump could be set to impose new sanctions on multiple Iranian entities, raising geopolitical tensions between the two nations. Comments by Russian energy minister Alexander Novak that oil producers had cut their output in accordance with a pact agreed in December also helped support prices, analysts said.

More Details:

<http://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20170206/business-news/Oil-edges-up-on-threat-of-US-issuing-new-Iran-sanctions.638785>

- **War with Iran? Tehran Vows to Destroy US Military Base and Israel If President Trump 'Makes A Mistake'**

A senior Iranian government official said Saturday Tehran was prepared to attack Tel Aviv and destroy a U.S. military base in Bahrain if the Trump White House ordered a military strike against Iran. Mojtaba Zonour, a member of Iran's National Security and Foreign Policy Commission and a former Islamic Revolution Guards Corps official, said Iran could bomb use Iranian missiles to bomb Tel Aviv in under seven minutes, the semi-official Fars News Agency reported.

More Details:

<http://www.ibtimes.com/war-iran-tehran-vows-destroy-us-military-base-israel-if-president-trump-makes-mistake-2486717>

- **Iran innovator of counter-extremism resolution at UN**

FM Zarif said Iran as one of the leading countries in the fight against extremism, is the innovator of a counter-extremism resolution at UN General Assembly offered by President Rouhani. Mohammad Javad Zarif made the remarks in a meeting with Indonesian president special envoy and former Foreign Minister Hassan Wirajuda on Sunday.

More Details:

<http://en.mehrnews.com/news/123304/iran-innovator-of-counter-extremism-resolution-at-UN>

- **Iran's stability due to its democracy: Kamal Kharrazi**

Kamal Kharrazi, head of Iran's Strategic Council on Foreign Relations, said Saturday that Iran's stability is based on its democracy. "Because of this popular might, Iran has become a regional power, and as a stable and democratic country, cannot be indifferent to the regional developments," said Kharrazi, addressing a gathering of Asian and African envoys to Iran.

More Details:

<http://www.tehrantimes.com/news/410804/iran-s-stability-due-to-its-democracy-Kamal-Kharrazi>

- **President Rouhani receives new Portuguese envoy in Tehran**

President Hassan Rouhani received credentials of new Portuguese Ambassador to Tehran Joao Jose Corte Real here on Sunday.

More Details:

<http://www.irna.ir/en/News/82417161/>

- **Rouhani calls for closer ties with Brazil, Portugal, Kyrgyzstan**

Iranian President Hassan Rouhani expressed Tehran's readiness to expand trade and economic and political relations with Brazil, Portugal and Kyrgyzstan. He made the comments in meetings with new ambassadors of the three countries in Tehran on Sunday.

More Details:

<http://www.iran-daily.com/News/177053.html>

- **Iran's envoy in Russia: Economic relations level not satisfactory**

Iran's Ambassador to Russia Mehdi Sanaei announced that according to the statistics value of economic exchanges between Iran and Russia during first nine months of year 2016 in comparison with the same period of preceding year (2015) increased 80 percent, but still it is not satisfactory, IRNA reported.

More Details:

<http://en.trend.az/iran/politics/2717337.html>

- **Iran's Anti-US Lawsuit Put in Motion**

Iran says a lawsuit that it had submitted to the International Court of Justice (ICJ) – the principal judicial organ of the United Nations – against the United States last summer for freezing billions of dollars worth of its assets has been officially put in motion.

More Details:

<http://ifpnews.com/news/politics/foreign-policies/2017/02/irans-anti-us-lawsuit-put-in-motion/>

4. ISRAEL – PALESTINE

- **Sixteen-year-old Palestinian girl sentenced to six years of jail for knife possession**

An Israeli court on Sunday morning sentenced a teenage Palestinian girl from Silwan in occupied East Jerusalem to six years in prison after she was charged with knife possession and planning a stab attack.

More Details

<http://www.albawaba.com/news/sixteen-year-old-palestinian-girl-sentenced-six-years-jail-knife-possession-933870>

- **Despite White House warning, Israel pushes bill to legalize settlements**

Israel's prime minister is moving ahead with a contentious bill that would legalize dozens of settlement outposts in the West Bank, despite claims by experts that the legislation is illegal and a warning from the White House that settlement construction "may not be helpful."

More Details

<http://www.bostonglobe.com/news/world/2017/02/05/despite-white-house-warning-israel-pushes-bill-legalize-settlements/FfDSr3buEFQaXmzPUSWFZK/story.html>

- **'War of the shrines' stirs tension between Palestinians, Israelis**

Israeli settlers raided the village of Kifl Hares in Salfit province in the northern West Bank on Jan. 8. It was not the first time, and it will not be the last. Every Jewish holiday, hundreds of Israeli settlers, under the protection of Israeli soldiers, enter Kifl Hares to pray in the village because it is linked to the Jewish prophet Joshua.

More Details

<http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2017/02/palestine-west-bank-shrines-israel-settlers-raids.html>

- **Will it be easy for Coptic Egyptians to go on pilgrimage to Jerusalem?**

The Higher Constitutional Court on Saturday issued a judicial verdict granting Egyptian Christians the right to take a one-month paid leave to go on pilgrimage to the contested Palestinian-Israeli city of Jerusalem. This ruling has raised many questions surrounding the right of Copts to visit Jerusalem, as the Coptic Orthodox Church banned its followers from visiting the city which has been under Israeli occupation since 1967.

More Details

<http://www.dailynewsegypt.com/2017/02/05/614343/>

- **UC Riverside student government votes to remove Israeli hummus**

The student government at University of California voted to approve a resolution calling for the removal of Sabra brand hummus from campus dining services. The resolution passed last week by a vote of 13 to 0 with one abstention. The removal was requested because the Sabra company's joint owner is the Israel-based Strauss Group, which allegedly supports the Israeli military.

More Details

<http://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx/224459>

- **Corbyn calls on PM to stand up for Palestinians in talks with Netanyahu**

Jeremy Corbyn has called on Theresa May to stand up for the rights of the Palestinian people when she meets Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Monday.

More Details

<http://jewishnews.timesofisrael.com/cornyn-calls-on-prime-minister-to-stand-up-for-palestinians-in-talks-with-netanyahu/>

- **Hamas rocket engineer killed during manufacturing**

Mohammad Walid Al-Koka, a rocket engineer for Hamas' military wing, died Sunday morning of wounds he sustained during a training accident in the Gaza Strip. According to estimations, he was killed in the midst of manufacturing a missile. Another operative sustained medium injuries in the incident.

More Details

<http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-4918248,00.html>

- **Palestinian official injured in 2nd assassination attempt targeting Palestinians in Lebanon**

The administrative office of the Palestinian National Security Forces, Abu Nidhal Shihada, was injured on Sunday by gunfire at the Ain Al-Hilwa Palestinian refugee camp in southern Lebanon. This is the second assassination attempt targeting a Palestinian official in Lebanon in one week, after the Palestinian embassy's security officer Ismail Shrouf survived gunfire on 29 January in the city of Saida.

More Details

<https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20170206-palestinian-official-injured-in-2nd-assassination-attempt-targeting-palestinians-in-lebanon/>

- **Trump Aides Met with Mossad**

Senior officials from Israel's Mossad intelligence agency, two weeks ago, made a covert visit to Washington D.C. and met with U.S. President Donald Trump's national security aides in order to coordinate their policies on a range of Middle East issues, Ha'aretz daily newspaper reported Sunday.

More Details

<http://imemc.org/article/trump-aides-met-with-mossad/>

5. JORDAN and LEBANON

- **Houry: Taef never mentioned proportionality**

Member of Parliament, Ammar Houry, on Monday reminded of the fact that Taef Agreement never mentioned proportionality in legislative elections, a suggestion that many political parties in Lebanon have been advocating.

More Details

<http://nna-leb.gov.lb/en/show-news/74993/Houry-Taef-never-mentioned-proportionality>

- **Enemy forces set up earthen barricades out looking Wazzani River bank**

Israel Enemy Forces set up on Monday morning earthen barricades on a hilltop out looking Wazzani River, NNA field reporter said. Two bulldozers and three pokiln vehicles have been witnessed performing scrapping activities in the aforementioned region since early this morning, NNA reporter added.

More Details

<http://nna-leb.gov.lb/en/show-news/74991/Enemy-forces-set-up-earthen-barricades-out-looking-Wazzani-River-bank>

- **Lebanon Polls: Jumblat with Amended 1960 Law, Hezbollah Backs Full Proportional System**

With the start of the countdown for the constitutional deadlines linked to Lebanon's parliamentary elections expected next May, the mission to agree on a new electoral law does not seem an easy task in light of the disputes among political parties, each supporting a format that suits its own political interests.

More Details

<http://english.aawsat.com/2017/02/article55366921/lebanon-polls-jumblat-amended-1960-law-hezbollah-backs-full-proportional-system>

- **Assailants shoot, injure Palestinian official in southern Lebanon**

Lebanese media quoted security officials as saying that Abu Nidal Shihada, an administrative official at the Palestinian National Security Forces, was assaulted at Ain al-Hilweh refugee camp located near the city of Sidon early Sunday.

More Details

<http://www.presstv.com/Detail/2017/02/06/509315/Lebanon-Sidon-Palestinian>

- **Pakistan Embassy in Lebanon holds event to mark Kashmir Solidarity Day**

Pakistan's Ambassador in Lebanon Aftab Khokher on Sunday said Jammu and Kashmir dispute was central piece of Pakistan's foreign policy and it would remain so till its resolution in accordance with UN Security Council resolutions and the aspirations of Kashmiri people. He was speaking at a function hosted by the Embassy of Pakistan in Lebanon to mark Kashmir Solidarity Day.

More Details

<http://www.app.com.pk/pakistan-embassy-in-lebanon-holds-event-to-mark-kashmir-solidarity-day/>

- **Jordan \$14 million agricultural project to launch in March**

Implementation of a multimillion-dollar project to enhance food security and agricultural productivity across the Kingdom will commence in March, according to a senior government official. The mega-project will train people from all governorates on vocational agricultural skills and “agribusiness management”, and then secure them with funds to start their own food and animal production projects, Minister of Agriculture Khaled Hneifat said on Thursday.

More Details

<http://www.albawaba.com/business/jordan-14-million-agricultural-project-launch-march-933874>

- **Jordanian airline pokes fun at Trump's travel ban troubles**

President Donald Trump's ban on travelers from seven Muslim-majority countries may be mired in legal limbo stateside, but one air carrier overseas is trying to focus on the bright side.

More Details

<http://www.turnto23.com/news/national/jordanian-airline-pokes-fun-at-trumps-travel-ban-troubles>

- **UAE, Jordan agree to boost ties**

Shaikh Abdullah Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, on Sunday received Ayman Safadi, Jordan's Minister of Foreign and Expatriates Affairs, at the Ministry.

More Details

<http://gulfnews.com/news/uae/government/uae-jordan-agree-to-boost-ties-1.1973446>

- **New head of Libyan embassy in Amman**

A new Libyan chargé d'affaires to Jordan has been announced today by the Presidency Council's foreign affairs minister Mohamed Siala. An embassy official confirmed to the Libya Herald tonight that Qais Faraj Barasi would leave his job as head of the Libyan consulate in Alexandria and move to the Amman embassy. He is expected to take up the post by the end of February.

More Details

<https://www.libyaherald.com/2017/02/05/new-head-of-libyan-embassy-in-amman/>

- **Jordan's government urged to legalise abortion in case of rape and incest**

Amman office on Saturday called on the government to introduce laws that would allow abortions in cases of rape and incest. "There are several countries and religious entities in our region that allow abortion in the first two months if it was the result of rape or incest," said SIGI President in Jordan Asma Khader.

More Details

<http://www.albawaba.com/news/jordan%E2%80%99s-government-urged-legalise-abortion-case-rape-and-incest-933730>

6. ARABIAN PENINSULA AND THE GULF OF BASRA

- **Saudi Arabia: Intensified Repression of Writers, Activists**

Saudi Arabia has stepped up arrests, prosecutions, and convictions of peaceful dissident writers and human rights advocates in 2017, Human Rights Watch said today. In January, a Saudi court sentenced two prominent activists to long jail terms, accusing them of being in contact with international media and human rights organizations. The authorities jailed two others, one of whom remains in detention while under investigation.

More Details:

<https://www.hrw.org/news/2017/02/06/saudi-arabia-intensified-repression-writers-activists>

- **Ballistic missile attack reported in Saudi capital: Yemeni media**

Yemen's local media have reported a ballistic missile attack on Saudi Arabia's capital Riyadh. The Yemeni army made the announcement of their first ever attack on the city via a statement released by the official state Yemen news agency on Sunday. In the statement, they claimed that the missile had been launched at a Saudi military base located to the west of the capital in retaliation for the kingdom's relentless war against their country.

More Details:

<http://www.presstv.com/Detail/2017/02/06/509301/yemen-saudi-arabia-riyadh-ballistic-missile>

- **Yemen family reunites in US**

At JFK on Sunday evening in the US, Abdullah Alghazali hugged and kissed his 13-year-old son, Ali Abdullah Alghazali, who he had not seen in six years. That wait was made even longer by Donald Trump's executive order. Ali and his mother, Musarlah Alghazali, had left Yemen a year and a half ago to Egypt because of the war at home. Musarlah came to the U.S. two and a half months ago, but Ali

stayed behind in Egypt with cousins while he waited for his visa to be approved. The boy was not able to leave until last Saturday, after the executive order was in effect.

More Details:

<http://www.thestandard.com.hk/breaking-news.php?id=84419>

- **Yemeni official praises King Salman relief center's support for his countrymen**

Abdul Raqeeb Fath, Yemeni minister of Local Administration, praised King Salman Center for Relief and Humanitarian Works for the contributions it has been making to the Yemeni people. The minister, who is also heading the Yemeni Higher Committee for Relief, told Yemeni news agency SABA that the King Salman center is playing a significant role in providing services to Yemenis in various sectors, like food, shelters, health and water. He added the support helps ease the sufferings of the Yemeni people caught up in the war waged by the Houthi rebels and Ali Abdullah Saleh's troops.

More Details:

<http://www.arabnews.com/node/1049876/saudi-arabia>

- **Bahraini court sentences 3 protesters to 15 years in prison**

A Bahraini court has handed down 15-year prison sentences to three citizens each over an alleged attack on a police headquarters during an anti-regime protest rally in 2013. The jail terms were issued by Bahrain's appeals court on Saturday, Arabic-language Bahrain Mirror news website reported. According to the report, those sentenced were among 40 Bahrainis accused of having thrown Molotov cocktails at the police headquarters in Khamis area on October 10, 2013.

More Details:

<http://en.abna24.com/news/bahrain/bahraini-court-sentences-3-protesters-to-15-years-in-prison.html>

- **Qatar Foundation welcomes Emomali Rahmon, President of the Republic of Tajikistan**

Qatar Foundation (QF) welcomed the president of the Republic of Tajikistan, Mr Emomali Rahmon, to Education City today. Mr Rahmon is in Qatar as part of a two-day State visit on invitation by His Highness Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, the Emir of Qatar. Mr Rahmon was welcomed to Qatar Foundation HQ this afternoon by Engineer Saad Ibrahim Al Muhannadi, lifetime member of the Board of Directors, QF.

More Details:

<http://www.albawaba.com/business/pr/qatar-foundation-welcomes-emomali-rahmon-president-republic-tajikistan-933982>

- **Qatar govt have nothing to do with letters of Qatari prince: Qatar ambassador**

Qatar's ambassador to Pakistan Saqr bin Mubarak Al-Mansouri on Saturday waded into the controversy involving Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and his family when he categorically said that his government had nothing to do with the letters of a Qatari prince to the Supreme Court hearing the Panama Papers case.

More Details:

<http://paktribune.com/news/Qatar-govt-have-nothing-to-do-with-letters-of-Qatari-prince-Qatar-ambassador-278169.html>

- **Oman Shipping Company showcases operational capacities, contributions to economy**

To showcase its growing fleet and contributions to Oman's economy and maritime industry, Oman Shipping Co (OSC) recently organised a familiarisation tour of one of its large LNG vessels for local media representatives. OSC, the official shipping arm of the Oman government that meets the transportation needs of the oil & gas sector, both locally and internationally, provided an exclusive tour on board Ibra LNG, that was berthed at the Qalhat LNG terminal in Sur.

More Details:

<http://www.muscatdaily.com/Archive/Business/Oman-Shipping-Company-showcases-operational-capacities-contributions-to-economy-4xv8>

- **Oman, Czech Republic hold political consultations**

Oman and the Czech Republic discussed means of enhancing cooperation in diverse fields on Sunday. The discussionis were held at the 2nd Political Consultations Session between the two sides held at the General Diwan of the Foreign Ministry on Sunday. The Omani side was chaired by Dr. Mohammed bin Awad Al Hassan, Acting Undersecretary of the Foreign Ministry for Diplomatic Affairs, while the Czech was chaired by Martin Tlapa, Deputy Minister for non-European Countries and Economic Diplomacy at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

More Details:

<http://timesofoman.com/article/102116/Oman/Government/Oman-Czech-Republic-hold-political-consultations>

- **World applauds UAE's polio eradication efforts in Pakistan**

The United Arab Emirates has long played a pivotal role in supporting global eradication efforts. Humanity is on the verge of one the greatest public health achievements in history eradicating polio. According to Khaleej Times report, Despite many challenges faced by the polioprogramme, Pakistan has made strides towards stopping transmission and in 2017 is the closest it has ever been to reaching that goal. After many years the highly transmittable yet vaccine preventable virus is finding that there are very few places left to hide.

More Details:

<http://pakobserver.net/world-applauds-uaes-polio-eradication-efforts-in-pakistan/>

7. EGYPT

- **Egypt Purchases Great Amounts of Natural Gas**

Cayro, Feb 6 (Prensa Latina) Egypt has signed a one billion dollar deal with three international companies, from Russia, France and Oman, to purchase 45 shipment of liquefied natural gas (LNG) that will be delivered in March. According to the Oil Minister, Tarek El-Molla, the Egyptian Natural Gas Holding Company (EGAS) entered into agreements with Russia's Rosneft, the French Engie and the Omani OTI Company.

More Details:

<http://www.plenglish.com/index.php?o=rn&id=8918&SEO=egypt-purchases-great-amounts-of-natural-gas>

- **Egyptian Court Gives Christian Copt Civil Servants a Month's Paid Leave to Visit Jerusalem**

The court said the Egyptian constitution guarantees the group the same rights as Muslim civil servants who get a month off once in a lifetime to undertake the pilgrimage to Mecca. Egypt's Supreme Constitutional Court has granted the same right to the country's Christian Copt civil servants to take a one-month's paid leave from work to visit Jerusalem that Egyptian Muslim civil servants get to take the pilgrimage to Mecca, the Egypt Independent news website reported Sunday.

More Details:

<http://www.haaretz.com/middle-east-news/egypt/1.769803>

- **Egypt wishes to join CPEC: NA speaker**

Islamabad-Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq has said that Egypt wishes to participate in China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). He was talking to media after meeting with Egyptian Ambassador to Pakistan Sherif Shaheen who called on him at the Parliament House, Islamabad.

More Details:

<http://nation.com.pk/islamabad/06-Feb-2017/egypt-wishes-to-join-cpec-na-speaker>

- **Egypt foreign reserves up to \$26.4bn**

The Central Bank of Egypt (CBE) announced on Sunday, that the country's net international reserves reached \$26.363 billion at the end of January 2017, increasing by \$2.098 billion from its level in December. Egypt's foreign exchange reserves reached \$26.265 billion in December compared to \$23.058 billion in November, according to the data of the CBE.

More Details:

<http://english.mubasher.info/news/3052762/Egypt-foreign-reserves-up-to-26-4bn>

- **Islamic authority rejects Egypt's move to reform divorce practice**

The Council of Senior Clerics in Al-Azhar ruled that verbal divorce, when meeting all requirements, has been an undisputed practice since the days of the Prophet Muhammad. Egypt's top Islamic authority on Sunday rejected President Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi's suggestion that legislation be adopted to invalidate the practice of Muslim men verbally divorcing their wives.

More Details:

<https://www.thestar.com/news/world/2017/02/05/islamic-authority-rejects-egypts-move-to-reform-divorce-practice.html>

- **Hunting Museum to be reopened after 10-year closure**

The Hunting Museum at Mohamed Ali Palace in Manial, will be reopened by Antiquities Minister Khaled al-Anany on Tuesday the. Several ambassadors, heads of foreign institutes in Egypt, ministry officials and university professors will attend. Elham Salah, head of the ministry's museums sector, said on Sunday that the reopening of the museum, which has been closed for 10 years, is evidence of the ministry's interest in accomplishing development projects for several Egyptian museums, which will promote incoming tourism.

More Details:

<http://www.egyptindependent.com//news/hunting-museum-be-reopened-after-10-year-closure>

- **Egypt denies bombing SPLA-IO rebels in Upper Nile**

Egypt has denied reports that its warplanes have bombed the rebel-held areas in South Sudan's Upper Nile, after SPLA-IO rebels accused Cairo of dropping nine bombs on their positions recently. According to Reuters, Egyptian foreign ministry spokesman Ahmed Abu Zeid denied the alleged air strikes, saying: "Egypt does not interfere in the internal affairs of other countries."

More Details:

<https://radiotamazuj.org/en/article/egypt-denies-bombing-spla-io-rebels-upper-nile>

- **Egypt's Foreign Reserves Reaches 26.4 Billion in January**

Egypt's Central Bank says that the country's foreign reserves have reached \$26.4 billion in January, up from \$23 billion in November. The bank announced the increase in a brief statement posted online Monday. The rise comes after the government secured a \$12 billion loan from the International Monetary Fund. In order to qualify for that loan, the government imposed a set of tough economic measures, including reduced subsidies and the devaluation and then flotation of its local currency.

More Details:

http://hosted.ap.org/dynamic/stories/M/ML_EGYPT_ECONOMY?SITE=AP&SECTION=HOME&TEMPLATE=DEFAULT&CTIME=2017-02-06-03-44-15

- **Egypt Accused of 'Dirty Deal' to Sabotage an Ethiopian Dam Project**

Anti-government rebels in South Sudan are accusing Egypt of conducting bombing raids on rebel targets. A statement published by the rebels accuses South Sudan's president Salva Kiir of risking a regional war. South Sudan is the world's youngest nation, having gained independence from Sudan in 2011. The region's last generational crisis war was an ethnic war mainly between two tribes, the Nuer and the Dinka. That war climaxed with the "Bor Massacre," which began on November 15, 1991, killing tens of thousands of people and displacing hundreds of thousands of people over a three month period.

More Details:

<http://www.breitbart.com/national-security/2017/02/05/5-feb-17-world-view-egypt-accused-dirty-deal-sabotage-ethiopian-dam-project/>

8. NORTH AFRICA

- **Morocco will never recognize W. Sahara: Deputy FM**

Morocco will “never recognize” Western Sahara’s independence despite rejoining the African Union after a decades-long dispute over the territory, Deputy Foreign Minister Nasser Bourita said in published remarks Sunday.

More details:

<http://www.arabnews.com/node/1049606/world>

- **Algeria Refuses Intelligence Coordination with Morocco: Official**

In an interview with AlYaoum 24, El Khiyame said that “Morocco’s hand is always outstretched for intelligence cooperation, but Algeria did not want to collaborate in the intelligence coordination.” He went on to add that Morocco has initiated discussions with Algeria regarding more cooperation between the two countries on numerous occasions, but Algeria has refused each time.

More details:

<https://www.moroccoworldnews.com/2017/02/207479/algeria-refuses-intelligence-coordination-morocco-official/>

- **Quebec Terror Attack: Mortal Remains of Moroccan National Repatriated**

The mortal remains of Azzeddine Soufiane, a Moroccan national, who died in the terrorist attack perpetrated last week at Quebec City Islamic Cultural Centre, were sent back on Saturday, according to the Kingdom’s consulate in Montreal.

More details:

<https://www.moroccoworldnews.com/2017/02/207484/quebec-terror-attack-mortal-remains-moroccan-national-repatriated/>

- **Hafter says LNA controls 95 percent of the country**

Khalifa Hafter has said that the Libyan National Army now controls 95 percent of the country. He is hoping that America’s new president Donald Trump will join the Russians and lift the arms embargo so equipping the Libyan National Army to fight their common terrorist enemy.

More details:

<https://www.libyaherald.com/2017/02/05/hafter-says-lna-controls-95-percent-of-the-country/>

- **Trump's travel ban puts off Washington conference on Libya**

A conference planned to take place this mid-February in Washington DC to discuss Libyan political issues was delayed over the Donald Trump's travel ban on seven Muslim-majority countries, including Libya.

More details:

<http://www.libyanexpress.com/trumps-travel-ban-puts-off-washington-conference-on-libya/>

- **Libyan embassy in Tunis to again start processing passport applications**

New passport equipment has arrived at the Libyan Embassy in Tunis which will allow it to process biometric passport applications.

More details:

<https://www.libyaherald.com/2017/02/05/libyan-embassy-in-tunis-to-again-start-processing-passport-applications/>

- **Protesters rally in Tunis against return of Tunisian terrorists from hot spots**

Several citizens, independent and civil society representatives rallied, Sunday morning, outside the Tunis Municipal Theatre to reaffirm their "outright opposition" to the return of Tunisian terrorists from areas of tension.

More details:

<http://www.tap.info.tn/en/Portal-Politics/8684129-protesters-rally-in>

- **Elections: Members of HIISE Offices to be installed Wednesday**

The High Independent Authority of Election Monitoring (HIISE) will install, from 8 to 16 February, the members, who will be deployed in its Offices in Algeria and abroad, said Sunday a communiqué of the Authority.

More details:

<http://en.aps.dz/algeria/16552-elections-members-of-hiise-offices-to-be-installed-wednesday>

- **Libya crisis: Messahel reiterates Algeria's consistent stance in favour of political solution**

Minister of Maghreb Affairs, African Union and Arab League Abdelkader Messahel has reiterated Sunday in Algiers, Algeria's consistent stance in favour of a political solution to the crisis in Libya,

recalling its continuous efforts and its rejection of any foreign interference, said the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in a communiqué.

More details:

<http://en.aps.dz/algeria/16548-libya-crisis-messahel-reiterates-algeria-s-consistent-stance-in-favour-of-political-solution>

- **Shaking the social foundations**

Protests against rising costs of living in Algeria turned violent on 2 January in Bejaia and Bouira, in the east of the country. The frustrations behind the protests had been bubbling under the surface since the population began to feel the effects of the state's declining oil revenues and proposed austerity measures.

More details:

<http://en.qantara.de/content/unrest-in-algeria-shaking-the-social-foundations>

9. AFGHANISTAN – PAKISTAN

- **54 militants killed in Southern Afghanistan, including Taliban Commander**

At least 54 militants including a local commander of the Taliban group was killed during the clearance operations in Afghanistan's southern Helmand province.

More details:

<http://thepeninsulaqatar.com/article/06/02/2017/54-militants-killed-in-Southern-Afghanistan,-including-Taliban-Commander>

- **With 11,500 Non-Combatants Killed, Including 3,500 Children, Casualties in Afghanistan Hit Record High in 2016: UN**

Civilian casualties in Afghanistan in 2016 hit their highest recorded level, the UN said today, with nearly 11,500 non-combatants -- one third of them children -- killed or wounded.

More details:

<http://www.outlookindia.com/newwire/story/with-11500-non-combatants-killed-including-3500-children-casualties-in-afghanistan-hit-record-high-in-2016-un/965652>

- **UN: Afghan Civilian Casualties Rose 3 Percent in 2016**

The number of civilians killed and wounded in Afghanistan's conflict rise by 3 percent in 2016 compared to the previous year, the U.N. mission said in its annual report released Monday.

More Details:

http://hosted.ap.org/dynamic/stories/A/AS_AFGHANISTAN_UN_CASUALTY_REPORT_ASOL-?SITE=AP&SECTION=HOME&TEMPLATE=DEFAULT&CTIME=2017-02-06-01-33-33

- **Stronger Relations between Russia, US Bring Hope for Peace in Afghanistan**

A recent report issued by a US agency estimates that the Afghan government controls less than 60 percent of the country. Afghan officials put the blame on the US and NATO which have failed to stabilize the country, while political and economic analysts recall the aid provided by the USSR and hope that now Russia can also help out.

More Details:

<https://sputniknews.com/world/201702051050365380-russia-us-afghanistan-security/>

- **Pakistan pushes for improved Afghan border management to control militants' movement**

Pakistan is seeking cooperation from Afghanistan to secure their nearly 2,600 kilometer long common border to consolidate achievements made in major military operations in tribal regions, Chinese news agency Xinhua says in a commentary.

More Details:

<http://www.app.com.pk/pakistan-pushes-for-improved-afghan-border-management-to-control-militants-movement/>

- **Islamabad seeks China-style relations with America, says minister**

Pakistan wants stable and all weather relations with the United States similar to its ties with China as the country seeks US investments to supplement the growth spurred by the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

More Details

<http://gulftoday.ae/portal/a59d80ec-372c-4378-84a2-1d8b4737d928.aspx>

- **Pakistan hopes to resume talks with India after state elections**

Planning and Development Minister Ahsan Iqbal hopes that there will be a better environment to pursue peace talks with India after the state assembly elections in the neighbouring country.

More Details

<http://www.dawn.com/news/1313043/pakistan-hopes-to-resume-talks-with-india-after-state-elections>

- **Pakistan should hold vote on merger with India, mocks Rajnath**

Indian Home Minister Rajnath Singh said on Sunday that a referendum must be conducted in Pakistan to check whether its citizens wanted to remain there or wanted to merge with India.

More Details

<http://www.dawn.com/news/1313044/pakistan-should-hold-vote-on-merger-with-india-mocks-rajnath>

- **United we stand: Kashmir Day observed across Punjab**

Major political parties on Sunday set up their camps side-by-side on The Mall Road to express solidarity with each other and the people of Indian-held Kashmir on Kashmir Solidarity Day.

More Details

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1318003/united-stand-kashmir-day-observed-across-punjab/>

- **'People want progress and development'**

Chief Minister Shahbaz Sharif has said that under the dynamic leadership of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, Pakistan is fast becoming a progressive and developed country and the projects of PML-N are examples of prevailing transparency in the country.

More Details:

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/184337-People-want-progress-and-development#>

10. TURKEY AND THE MIDDLE EAST

- **60 ISIL suspects detained in Turkish capital**

Anti-extremism police in the capital Ankara have detained 60 ISIL-linked suspects early Sunday morning, security sources said. The suspects, most of them foreign nationals, have been charged

with being members of an armed extremist organization, according to the sources who spoke on condition of anonymity due to restrictions on talking to the media.

More Details:

<http://www.worldbulletin.net/turkey/184250/albanian-pm-rama-meets-turkish-president-erdogan>

- **Turkish delegation visits Gaza to discuss power crisis**

A Turkish delegation of top energy official arrived in Israel-blockaded Gaza Strip on Monday to discuss solutions for a decade-long electricity crisis in the Palestinian territory. The 4-strong delegation crossed into Gaza via the Erez crossing for talks with their Palestinian counterparts, Ghazi Hamad, Gaza's foreign ministry undersecretary, said.

More Details:

<http://aa.com.tr/en/middle-east/turkish-delegation-visits-gaza-to-discuss-power-crisis/742313>

- **Daesh's so-called al-Bab governor killed in Turkish operation**

Abu Khalid al-Urduni, the supposed Daesh-appointed governor of al-Bab, was killed on Saturday, Feb. 4, in counterterrorism operations, according to a written statement released by the Turkish military the following day. News of Al-Urduni's death surfaced after Turkish military sources obtained the congratulatory address sent by Daesh's supposed Raqqa governor to the newly appointed governor of al-Bab. In his letter, the terrorist congratulates the newly appointed al-Bab governor, by wishing him all the best in his new position, and in the war against "apostates," and the "allies of the West."

More Details:

<http://www.dailysabah.com/war-on-terror/2017/02/05/daeshs-so-called-al-bab-governor-killed-in-turkish-operation>

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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