



# MIDDLE EAST DAILY BULLETIN

## GÜNLÜK ORTADOĐU BÜLTENİ

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## 1. IRAQ

- **The Rapporteur of the Parliament Escapes an Assassination Attempt in Erbil**

The rapporteur of the House of Representatives, Niazi Momar Oglo escaped, on Saturday night, an assassination attempt in Erbil, the fourth one he is subjected to in the provincial capital. He said in a press statement that "an armed group attacked his house in Arbil when the power went off, where his son was with him and they responded to the shooting."

More Details:

[http://www.ninanews.com/News\\_Details.aspx?kkReth%252fd%252bOBDAPOLkMG3Kw%253d%253d](http://www.ninanews.com/News_Details.aspx?kkReth%252fd%252bOBDAPOLkMG3Kw%253d%253d)

- **Islamic State slaughter 8 in Kirkuk for helping civilians flee**

Islamic State extremists executed late Monday eight civilians in the group's stronghold town of Hawija, Kirkuk, for helping fellow locals flee the region, sources said. A security source told Alsumaria News that the execution, which was carried out by beheading, came as per a decree from the group's so-called "Sharia court". They were accused of assisting civilians to flee to areas in Kirkuk held by Kurdish Peshmerga troops as well as Salahuddin province.

More Details:

<http://www.iraqnews.com/iraq-war/islamic-state-slaughter-8-kirkuk-helping-civilians-flee/>

- **9 Airstrikes in Iraq Destroy Large Number Of IS Facilities**

The US-led coalition conducted nine airstrikes consisting of 72 engagements against the Islamic State (IS) near Kisik, Mosul, Sinjar and Tal Afar in Iraq. Near the northern Iraqi city of Mosul six airstrikes engaged with six IS tactical units and a staging area, destroying 11 fighting positions, 8 mortar systems and a number of vehicles, buildings, weapons, roadblocks and an artillery system. The strikes have further managed to destroy at least 11 supply routes suppressing ten mortar teams and three tactical units.

More Details:

<http://www.basnews.com/index.php/en/news/iraq/334769>

- **Why Iraq was removed from the revised travel ban**

Iraq was removed from a revised version of an executive order banning travel from certain Muslim-majority countries after intensive lobbying from the Iraqi government at the highest levels, a senior

US official told CNN Monday. President Donald Trump signed the order midday in the Oval Office, according to the White House.

More Details:

[http://www.shafaaq.com/en/En\\_NewsReader/57e9cd19-d470-4c37-ab46-29713db29481/Why-Iraq-was-removed-from-the-revised-travel-ban](http://www.shafaaq.com/en/En_NewsReader/57e9cd19-d470-4c37-ab46-29713db29481/Why-Iraq-was-removed-from-the-revised-travel-ban)

- **Daesh Leader Al-Baghdadi's Cousin Reportedly Captured in Mosul**

Iraqi Federal Police have captured the cousin of Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, leader of the Daesh terrorist group, local media said Sunday. The Daesh leader's relative was captured after an intelligence tip-off in Mosul's western Josaq district, which had recently been retaken from terrorists, the Al Sumaria channel reported, citing its own sources.

More Details:

[http://www.pukmedia.com/EN/EN\\_Direje.aspx?Jimare=39918](http://www.pukmedia.com/EN/EN_Direje.aspx?Jimare=39918)

- **Iraqi defense minister discusses pushing up with support to armed forces**

Iraqi Minister of Defense Irfan al-Hayali has met with Head of the French Foreign Ministry Directorate for Middle East and Africa relations Gen. Cardamon and his accompanying delegation, the Baghdad Post reported. The Ministry of Defense said in a statement that the meeting, held Sunday night, was attended by senior officials from the Iraqi ministry who briefed the French delegation on the latest developments in the Armed Forces battle to liberate the city of Mosul from ISIS.

More Details:

<http://www.thebaghdadpost.com/en/story/7794/Iraqi-defense-minister-discusses-pushing-up-with-support-to-armed-forces>

- **Vital bridge captured by Iraqi forces as they inch closer to Mosul's Old City**

Mosul's Old City is coming further into the sights of Iraqi forces as they liberated a main bridge from ISIS that leads to this part of the city on Monday. The liberated al-Hurriya Bridge is one of five bridges that connects both sides of Mosul which is divided by the Tigris River.

More Details:

<https://www.almasdarnews.com/article/vital-bridge-captured-iraqi-forces-inch-closer-mosuls-old-city/>

- **Iraq security forces seize Mosul's main government complex and museum from Islamic State holdouts**

Elite Iraqi security forces dislodged Islamic State militants from the main government buildings in Mosul on Tuesday, their last major city stronghold in Iraq, an Iraqi spokesman said. Mosul's main museum, which was damaged and looted by the militants, was also taken, Lieutenant Colonel Abdel Amir al-Mohammadawi, a spokesman for the elite interior ministry Rapid Response units told Reuters.

More Details:

<http://www.scmp.com/news/world/middle-east/article/2076691/iraq-security-forces-seize-mosul-main-government-complex-and>

- **Iraqi security forces have captured the central bank's main branch in Mosul.**

Iraqi security forces have captured the central bank's main branch in Mosul, which Islamic State had looted when it overran the city in 2014, a military spokesman says. Rapid Response soldiers also seized a building that housed Islamic State's main court of justice, Lieutenant Colonel Abdel Amir al-Mohammadawi, a spokesman for the elite interior ministry units, told Reuters.

More Details:

<http://www.sbs.com.au/news/article/2017/03/07/iraqi-forces-capture-central-bank-mosul>

- **Anti-Daesh assaults gain ground in Iraq, Syria**

Iraqi forces advanced in west Mosul and fighters in neighboring Syria seized a key supply route to Raqqa Monday, as twin US-backed offensives gained ground against Daesh. Supported by the US-led anti-Daesh coalition, Iraqi forces and a Kurdish-Arab alliance in Syria are battling to push the extremists from Mosul and Raqqa, the last two major urban centers under their control.

More Details:

<http://www.arabnews.com/node/1064416/middle-east>

- **Iraq welcomes its removal from US travel ban**

Iraq welcomed its removal from a revised US travel ban on Monday, calling it a "positive message" at a time when American and Iraqi forces are battling the Daesh group. Iraq was among seven Muslim-majority countries whose nationals were temporarily banned from traveling to the United States in an earlier order issued by President Donald Trump in January, which was blocked by the courts.

More Details:

<http://gulftoday.ae/portal/e161ed50-a613-4a95-838c-dfca90cf9ab2.aspx>

- **Iraq forces advance in renewed Mosul push**

Iraqi security forces advanced Monday towards a compound of extremist-held government buildings and a bridgehead, on the second day of a renewed push in west Mosul, officers said. The operation to retake west Mosul, the largest urban population centre still in the hands of the Daesh terror group, began on February 19, but had slowed amid several days of bad weather until a renewed drive began on Sunday.

More Details:

<http://jordantimes.com/news/region/iraq-forces-advance-renewed-mosul-push>

- **Iran Calls for Boosting Cultural Cooperation with Iraq**

Iranian Culture Minister Reza Salehi Amiri in a meeting with Head of the Iraqi parliament Endowment and Religious Affairs Commission Ali al-Alaq in Tehran called for boosting cultural relations between the two countries. "The two countries intend to expand cultural ties, but a mechanism is needed to further strengthen their relations," Salehi Amiri said during the meeting in the Iranian capital on Sunday.

More Details:

<http://en.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13951216000813>

- **US troops train Iraqi forces in key bridging skills**

Iraqi soldiers manoeuvre sections of floating bridge on a muddy, man-made lake as American trainers instruct them in skills that have played a key role in the war against jihadists. Green metal boats churn a frothy wake as they propel the sections before the Iraqi forces connect them together during the training at the Taji military base, north of Baghdad.

More Details:

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/wires/afp/article-4287580/US-troops-train-Iraqi-forces-key-bridging-skills.html>

- **Iraq Border Guards Clash with ISIL Militants West of Anbar, Several Arrested**

Commander of Iraq's Border Guards in Anbar Province announced that his forces clashed with members of the ISIL terror group, West of the province, and he added that a number of the militants were arrested during the security operation. "A joint contingent of Iraqi Border Guards in Anbar, the command's commando brigade and forces of Hashd al-Ashaeri raided Albu Hayat village, West of

Trebil-Waleed intersection in Rutba District,310 km West of Ramadi,” Lieutenant General Ammar al-Kobessi,said in a press statement, Al Masdar reported.

More Details:

<http://en.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13951216000904>

- **Kurdish parties show full support for Baghdad-Kirkuk oil agreement**

Kurdish parties in Kirkuk have shown unanimous support Monday for the implementation of an agreement brokered earlier in January between the province and Baghdad which includes more investment in the oil sector in Kirkuk and employment opportunities for the local people. This comes following the deployment of a force from the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) last Thursday to the state-run North Oil Company (NOC) in Kirkuk, which resulted in stopping oil exports for hours in an effort to force Baghdad to commit to the agreement.

More Details:

<http://www.rudaw.net/english/kurdistan/060320177>

- **Germany Sees Surge in Number of Militants Traveling to Iraq, Syria**

German media reported a surge in the number of homegrown militants who have traveled to conflict zones in the Middle East. A total of 910 homegrown militants have traveled from Germany to Iraq and Syria. The figure was nearly 800 about a year ago, Der Spiegel reported.

More Details:

<http://en.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13951216001167>

## 2. SYRIA

- **Abbas, Mikdad meet delegation representing Libyan tribes and cities**

Speaker of the People’s Assembly Hadiyeh Abbas affirmed that Syria and Libya are facing the same threat, because the states that conspired against the two countries continue to support terrorists in them.

More Details:

<http://sana.sy/en/?p=101474>

- **Mental health crisis plaguing Syria's children - Save the Children**

Six years of violence and bloodshed have spawned a mental health crisis among Syria's children whose impact will be felt for decades, according to the international charity Save the Children.

More Details:

<http://www.rte.ie/news/2017/0307/857709-syria/>

- **EU to host Syria conference in April**

The European Union (EU) foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini on Monday announced that the bloc will on April 5 host an international conference on Syria's future.

More Details:

[http://www.china.org.cn/world/2017-03/07/content\\_40421610.htm](http://www.china.org.cn/world/2017-03/07/content_40421610.htm)

- **Syrian fighters cut main road linking ISIS-held areas**

US-backed Syrian fighters on Monday cut the main road between the northern Syrian city of Raqqa, which is controlled by the Islamic State, and the eastern city of Deir el-Zour, which is partly held by ISIS, as they press into the extremists' territory in Syria.

More Details:

<http://www.bostonglobe.com/news/world/2017/03/06/syrian-fighters-cut-main-road-linking-isis-held-areas/oOrvbLzi3CBt35V3fLa7LJ/story.html>

- **Pentagon: US troops move closer to Manbij, Syria, to remind other forces that the fight is with Islamic State**

The United States has deployed small teams of troops into a crowded northern Syrian battlespace to help focus several armed forces in the region on the battle against the Islamic State group, a Pentagon spokesman said Monday.

More Details:

<http://www.stripes.com/news/pentagon-us-troops-move-closer-to-manbij-syria-to-remind-other-forces-that-the-fight-is-with-islamic-state-1.457353#.WL5WldSLSmU>

- **Daesh terrorists impose 'Afghan dress' in Syria's Raqqah**

The Daesh Takfiri terrorist group has imposed an 'Afghan-style' dress code on men in Syria's northern province of Raqqah so that its members can't be distinguished from civilians.

More Details:

<http://www.presstv.com/Detail/2017/03/06/513298/Daesh-Syria-Ragqah-dress-code>

- **Syrian Army Advances Against Daesh in Deir ez-Zor**

Syrian army units clashed with terrorists of groups affiliated with Daesh in the southern outskirts of the eastern Syrian city of Deir ez-Zor, local media reported on Monday.

More Details:

<https://sputniknews.com/middleeast/201703061051320406-syria-army-deir-ez-zor/>

- **Tensions Intensifying among Terrorist Groups in Syria's Idlib**

Media sources disclosed that a new wave of tensions has erupted between the newly-formed Tahrir al-Sham Hay'at (the Levant Liberation Board) and Ahrar al-Sham in Northern Idlib.

More Details:

<http://en.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13951216001395>

- **No evidence of Assad's use of chemicals**

Mr. Mikhail Alexandrov told in an interview that Egypt had also been a victim of what he believed was Western international support for terrorism; thus, Al-Sisi, upon seeing the Assad success in Syria, tried to become closer to the country and prevent further damage to Egypt's national interests through following a Western line which had been categorically destabilizing the region

More Details:

[http://en.abna24.com/news/middle-east/no-evidence-of-assads-use-of-chemicals\\_816039.html](http://en.abna24.com/news/middle-east/no-evidence-of-assads-use-of-chemicals_816039.html)

### 3. IRAN

- **Iran's show of national might disappoints enemies: Ayatollah Khamenei**

Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei says Iranians should put their national strength on display to discourage enemies from carrying out any act of aggression against the country.

More Details:

<http://www.presstv.ir/Detail/2017/03/06/513222/Iran-Leader-Khamenei>

- **Iran, Tajikistan maintain strategic relations**

Chairman of the Committee for Foreign Policy and National Security of Iran Alaeddin Boroujerdi has said Tehran and Dushanbe have strategic relationship based on strengthening and consolidating cooperation.

More Details:

<http://en.mehrnews.com/news/124049/Iran-Tajikistan-maintain-strategic-relations>

- **No progress made on restoring ties with Cairo: Iran**

Despite its vitality for the Middle East, no special advance has been made on relations between Tehran and Cairo, stalled for about four decades now, a spokesman with Iran's Foreign Ministry said on Monday.

More Details:

<http://www.tehrantimes.com/news/411691/No-progress-made-on-restoring-ties-with-Cairo-Iran>

- **UNHCR official: Iran's measures for refugees exemplary**

Representative for the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Tehran Sivanka Dana Pala said here on Monday that Iran's measures for refugees exemplary.

More Details:

<http://www.irna.ir/en/News/82454949/>

- **Security and Development, Two Sides of Same Coin: Iran DM**

Iranian Defence Minister Brigadier General Hossein Dehqan highlighted the interdependence of security and development, saying that they are two sides of the same coin.

More Details:

<http://ifpnews.com/exclusive/2017/03/security-development-two-sides-coin-iran-dm/>

- **Iran to Hold City Councils Elections Electronically in 10,000 Polling Stations**

Iran plans to hold the 5th City and Village Councils elections through using electronic voting in 10,000 polling stations, the head of the central board responsible for monitoring the elections announced.

More Details:

<https://www.tasnimnews.com/en/news/2017/03/06/1347556/iran-to-hold-city-councils-elections-electronically-in-10-000-polling-stations>

- **France ready to renew Iran's rail fleet**

France's economy minister has voiced readiness of Paris to contribute to modernization of Iran's rail industry.

More Details:

<http://en.mehrnews.com/news/124038/France-ready-to-renew-Iran-s-rail-fleet>

- **Malaysia seeking to double Iran LPG imports**

Malaysia is expecting to increase liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) imports from Iran, said Wiratmaja Puja, the director general of oil and gas at the Energy and Mineral Resources Ministry.

More Details:

<http://iran-daily.com/News/188825.html>

- **US Citizens May Open Bank Account in Iran**

The Office of Foreign Assets Control affiliated with the US Treasury Department has allowed American citizens to open accounts in Iranian banks, said the Central Bank of Iran's deputy for foreign Finance

More Details:

<https://financialtribune.com/articles/economy-business-and-markets/60949/us-citizens-may-open-bank-account-in-iran>

- **Iran Test Fires Ballistic Missile Interceptor**

The Iranian Air Defense Force (IADF) has successfully conducted a test of its newly acquired S-300PMU-2 Favourite long-range surface-to-air missile (SAM) air defense system, Iranian state media reported on March 4.

More Details:

<http://thediplomat.com/2017/03/iran-test-fires-ballistic-missile-interceptor/>

## 4. ISRAEL – PALESTINE

- **US warned Israel of ‘immediate crisis’ if West Bank annexed – Israeli defense minister**

Israel risks a “crisis” with the new US administration if it moves to annex the West Bank, Israeli Defense Minister Avigdor Lieberman has cautioned in response to radical proposals related to Palestinian territories, citing a “direct” warning from Washington.

More Details

<https://www.rt.com/news/379676-us-israel-west-bank-annexation/>

- **France ‘concerned’ by IDF Plan to Demolish Beduin Village**

"These demolition orders pose an imminent threat against an already vulnerable Palestinian community," the French Foreign Ministry said in reaction to Israel's plan to demolish the village.

More Details

<http://www.jpost.com/Israel-News/France-concerned-by-IDF-plan-to-demolish-Beduin-village-483427>

- **US to Israel: Not so fast on the one-state solution**

In his first meeting as president with Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Donald Trump stated publicly that he had no particular connection to the long-standing American “two-state solution” policy in regard to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Israeli defense minister Avigdor Lieberman now says that the Trump administration has rediscovered the wisdom of tradition.

More Details

<http://hotair.com/archives/2017/03/06/us-to-israel-not-so-fast-on-the-one-state-solution/>

- **Israel Kills Prominent Palestinian Revolutionary Basel Araj**

Palestinian progressive factions condemned the killing of Basel Araj and called it an “extrajudicial killing” by Israeli forces. Palestinians took to the streets Monday afternoon in the occupied West Bank city of Ramallah to protest the killing of prominent Palestinian activist Basel Araj in an overnight raid, as several Palestinian factions issued statements condemning his killing.

More Details

<http://www.telesurtv.net/english/news/Israel-Kills-Prominent-Palestinian-Revolutionary-Basel-Araj-20170306-0015.html>

- **Israeli slams women’s protest for giving Palestinian bomber top role**

The niece of an Israeli killed in a terrorist attack nearly 50 years ago criticized the planned International Women’s Strike for allowing one of the convicted terrorists in a leadership position. In an op-ed published last week on the Huffington Post website, Terry Joffe Benaryeh said she commends the goal of the strike, a push for women’s equality. The strike is planned for March 8, the official observance of International Women’s Day.

More Details

<http://www.timesofisrael.com/israeli-slams-womens-protest-for-giving-palestinian-bomber-top-role/>

- **Switzerland Funds NGOS that call for Israel’s Destruction**

A February article in the Swiss daily Basler Zeitung reported that some of the nearly \$60 million its government has sent in support of Middle East projects funds initiatives that call for the destruction of Israel and the murder of Jews. “Switzerland finances in different ways organizations in Israel and the Palestinian territories that call for the annihilation of Israel and for the death of Jews,” wrote Dominik Feusi, senior editor of Basler Zeitung.

More Details

<http://www.jpost.com/Israel-News/Switzerland-funds-NGOs-that-call-for-Israels-destruction-483406>

- **New homes not intended for Arab village facing severe housing shortage, says group**

Israel plans to build dozens of new homes in an Arab village facing severe housing shortage in northern Israel – and offer them to non-residents, a rights center said on Monday. According to Adalah – The Legal Center for Arab Minority Rights in Israel, tenders for 72 new housing units in the Arab coastal village of Jisr al-Zarqa are open for anyone and not only residents of the village, which has a housing shortage of more than 730 units.

More Details:

<http://english.wafa.ps/page.aspx?id=pMLdELa56204821662apMLdEL>

- **Palestinian children gather at Jerusalem municipality to protest school closure**

After Israeli authorities shut down their school more than two weeks ago over alleged “incitement” in its study materials, students of al-Nukhba -- a private elementary school in the occupied East Jerusalem town of Sur Bahir -- gathered on Monday in the courtyard of Israel’s Jerusalem municipality to attend class and protest the decision to close the school.

More Details:

<http://www.maannews.com/Content.aspx?id=775827>

- **Israeli forces raid Palestinian house near Bethlehem, turn it into military post**

Israeli army forces on Tuesday morning occupied an under-construction building in the town of Tuqu east of Bethlehem in the southern occupied West Bank, turning the house into a military post. Large numbers of Israeli troops were deployed on the rooftop of a house belonging to Juma Muhammad Ali near on the main road of Tuqu, near the al-Khansa school.

More Details

<http://www.maannews.com/Content.aspx?ID=775834>

- **Israeli, Palestinian students negotiate the 'ultimate deal'**

While peace talks between the Palestinian and Israeli leadership have been on ice since 2014, last week Israeli, Palestinian and international high school classmates took a shot at negotiating what United States President Donald Trump has called the "ultimate deal."

More Details

<http://www.timesofisrael.com/israeli-palestinian-students-negotiate-the-ultimate-deal/>

## 5. JORDAN and LEBANON

- **'Lebanese army is Hezbollah unit'**

Defense Minister Liberman presents new data on Syrian/Lebanese theater in briefing to Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee. The Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee heard today (Monday) a briefing from the Defense Minister, Avigdor Lieberman.

More Details

<http://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx/226224>

- **Kataeb Slams 'Disregard for Constitution', Calls for 'Imposing Lebanese Law' on Palestinian Camps**

The Kataeb Party on Monday slammed the ruling political class over what it called "the disregard for constitution and deadlines," warning that authorities' perceived negligence has started to pose an "existential threat."

More Details

<http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/226532-kataeb-slams-disregard-for-constitution-calls-for-imposing-lebanese-law-on-palestinian-camps>

- **Lebanon and Egypt to sign MoU to ramp up trade**

Lebanon and Egypt will sign a memorandum of understanding this month to boost trade ties between the two countries, a statement issued Monday by the Industry Ministry said. “The two countries will sign a memorandum of understanding on the sidelines of the visit of Prime Minister Saad Hariri to Egypt this month,” said the statement adding that this initiative will boost Lebanese industrial exports to the Egyptian market.

More Details

<http://www.albawaba.com/business/lebanon-and-egypt-sign-mou-ramp-trade-946650>

- **Report: UAE Summons Lebanese Ambassador after Aoun Defends Hizbullah**

The United Arab Emirates' Foreign Ministry has reportedly summoned Lebanon's Ambassador to Abu Dhabi to protest statements made by President Michel Aoun about the need for Hizbullah's arms to back the Lebanese army, al-Akhbar daily reported on Tuesday.

More Details

<http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/226550-report-uae-summons-lebanese-ambassador-after-aoun-defends-hizbullah>

- **French Defense Minister: 20 million euros earmarked for Lebanon security**

French Minister of Defense, Jean-Yves Le Drian, on Monday stressed that France was working on reinforcing the Lebanese army, highlighting the necessity to cooperate with the military institution in its battle against terrorism.

More Details

<http://nna-leb.gov.lb/en/show-news/76214/French-Defense-Minister-20-million-euros-earmarked-for-Lebanon-security>

- **Government initiatives bring stability to Jordan's real estate**

Jordanian government's tax breaks and competitive offers from the kingdom's developers have resulted in a stable sales market despite oversupply of housing units, according to leading real estate consultancy Asteco. Prospective buyers in Jordan are taking a cautious approach to investing by seeking out smaller units offering the best value for money, stated Asteco in its latest report.

More Details

[http://www.tradearabia.com/news/CONS\\_321633.html](http://www.tradearabia.com/news/CONS_321633.html)

- **UAE-Jordanian forum discusses ties**

The UAE-Jordanian Investment Forum was held on Monday under the patronage and presence of Sultan Bin Saeed Al Mansouri, Minister of Economy, and Ali Al Ghazawi, the Jordanian Minister of Labour at the Intercontinental Hotel in Abu Dhabi. The meeting was attended by several officials from both countries, as well as investors, businessmen and representatives from the private sectors, chambers of commerce and investment authorities.

More Details

<http://gulftoday.ae/portal/99edbc78-8d11-451d-8195-ee36c09065ee.aspx>

- **Jordan's real GDP growth to pick up: QNB**

Jordan's real GDP growth is expected to moderate in 2016 to 2.1 percent from 2.4 percent in 2015 due to further fiscal consolidation, the impact of regional conflict, softening demand from China and the GCC for Jordan's exports as well as lower prices for these exports.

More Details

<http://thepeninsulaqatar.com/article/06/03/2017/Jordan-s-real-GDP-growth-to-pick-up-QNB>

- **UAE-Jordanian Investment Forum held in Abu Dhabi**

The UAE-Jordanian Investment Forum was held on Monday under the patronage and presence of Sultan bin Saeed Al Mansouri, Minister of Economy, and Ali Al Ghazawi, the Jordanian Minister of Labour at the Intercontinental Hotel in Abu Dhabi. The meeting was attended by several officials from both countries, as well as investors, businessmen and representatives from the private sectors, chambers of commerce and investment authorities.

More Details

<http://wam.ae/en/details/1395302601268>

- **Report: Severe restrictions on media, free speech in Jordan in 2016**

One of the most significant human rights problems in Jordan in 2016 was the restrictions on the freedom of expression, a US report has said, as the government reiterated its support for media freedoms. The US Department of State's 2016 Human Rights Country Report, recently posted on the agency's website, alleges that these restrictions limited the ability of citizens and the media to criticise government policies and officials, also citing reported mistreatment and allegations of torture by security and government officials.

More Details

<http://www.albawaba.com/news/report-severe-restrictions-media-free-speech-jordan-2016-946332>

## 6. ARABIAN PENINSULA AND THE GULF OF BASRA

- **Bahrain seeks dissolution of secular opposition party**

Bahrain's justice ministry said Monday it filed a lawsuit to dissolve a secular opposition party, the state-run news agency said, months after the country's main Shiite opposition party was banned.

More details:

<http://www.france24.com/en/20170306-bahrain-seeks-dissolution-secular-opposition-party>

- **KPMG Holds Seminar on tax law Amendments**

KPMG on Monday hosted a breakfast seminar on the recent amendments in Oman's income tax law. The event provided an opportunity to over 100 senior C-suite professionals to understand the implications and intricacies involved in the sweeping changes which were introduced last week to Oman's income tax law.

More Details:

<http://www.muscatdaily.com/Archive/Business/KPMG-holds-seminar-on-tax-law-amendments-4yw2#ixzz4acvDHhwo>

- **Qatar sets sights on a smart future**

HE the Prime Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Abdullah bin Nasser bin Khalifa al-Thani launching the Smart Qatar Programme, Tasmu, yesterday at Qitcom 2017 as other dignitaries look on.

More details:

<http://www.gulf-times.com/story/535483/Qatar-sets-sights-on-a-smart-future>

- **Saudi Arabia Confirms before UN Human Right's Council: Terrorism Poses Ongoing, Ferocious Threat to Peoples of the World**

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia reiterated its stance towards terrorism, confirming that the concept of extremism, reported by the Special Rapporteur of Cultural Rights, does not affect a particular region, race or creed, as it is a real lesion affecting all human communities.

More details:

<http://sites.alriyadh.com/en/article/1156564/Saudi-Arabia-Confirms-before-UN-Human-Rights-Council-Terrorism-Poses-Ongoing-Ferocious-Threat-to-Peoples-of-the-World>

- **Saudi king cancels Lebanon trip after Aoun defends Hezbollah weapons**

King Salman Bin Abdul Aziz Al Saud has cancelled his upcoming trip to Lebanon because of the statements made by President Michel Aoun that praised Hezbollah and backed the militia's right to bear arms alongside the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF).

More details:

<http://gulfnews.com/news/gulf/saudi-arabia/saudi-king-cancels-lebanon-trip-after-aoun-defends-hezbollah-weapons-1.1989041>

- **Malaysian police say foiled attack on Arab royalty ahead of Saudi king visit**

Malaysia on Tuesday said seven militants arrested late last month ahead of a visit Saudi Arabia's King Salman were planning an attack on "Arab royalties".

More details:

<http://www.kitco.com/news/2017-03-07/UPDATE-1-Malaysian-police-say-foiled-attack-on-Arab-royalty-ahead-of-Saudi-king-visit.html>

- **Emaar shares tumble after 15% proposed cash dividend**

Emaar Properties shares tumbled along with Dubai index on Tuesday after the company announced 15 per cent cash dividend, unchanged from last year.

More details:

<http://gulfnews.com/business/companies/emaar-shares-tumble-after-15-proposed-cash-dividend-1.1989541>

- **Al-Qaeda Explosives Expert, Former Guantanamo Prisoner Killed In Yemen**

A campaign of more than 40 U.S. air strikes against Al-Qaeda in Yemen killed a former detainee at Guantanamo Bay who was released in 2009 despite being considered a "high threat," the Pentagon said on March 6.

More details:

<http://www.rferl.org/a/guantanamo-yemen-al-qaeda-explosives-expert-killed/28354996.html>

- **IGP: Yemeni terror suspects were targeting Saudi royalty**

The four Yemenis who were nabbed by the police's Counter-Terrorism Division were planning to harm the Arab royals during their visit to Malaysia, according to the Inspector-General of Police.

More details:

<http://www.thestar.com.my/news/nation/2017/03/07/igp-yemeni-terror-suspects-were-targeting-saudi-royalty/#Z35gWGwZ1kFCZ8gF.99>

- **Qatar and Bahrain relations have 'historic dimensions'**

Qatar accorded a warm welcome to the Crown Prince, Deputy Supreme Commander and First Deputy Prime Minister of Bahrain, Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, who arrived here yesterday on a two-day visit.

More details:

<http://thepeninsulaqatar.com/article/06/03/2017/Qatar-and-Bahrain-relations-have-historic-dimensions-1>

## 7. EGYPT

- **Egypt condemns terrorist attack in Mali that killed 12**

Egypt condemned on Monday a terrorist attack on a military base in Mali that killed 12 soldiers, according to a statement by the Egyptian foreign ministry.

More Details:

<http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/64/259432/Egypt/Politics-/Egypt-condemns-terrorist-attack-in-Mali-that-kille.aspx>

- **Shoukry discusses illegal immigration at EU foreign ministers meeting**

Egyptian Minister of Foreign Affairs Sameh Shoukry attended a number of meetings with high officials in Brussels, which focused on illegal immigration along with bilateral relations.

More Details:

<http://www.dailynewsegypt.com/2017/03/06/617458/>

- **President can deal with Arabs who own desert land like Egyptians: Commissioners Authority**

The Administrative Court's State Commissioners Authority recommended on Monday that the president should be able to deal with Arabs who own desert land in Egypt the same way as Egyptians, provided the Cabinet grants a concession.

More Details:

<http://www.egyptindependent.com//news/president-can-deal-arabs-who-own-desert-land-egyptians-commissioners-authority-0>

- **Kotzias welcomes shift in EU policy toward Egypt, in statements after FAC in Brussels**

Foreign Minister Nikos Kotzias on Monday expressed satisfaction with the EU's change of policy toward Egypt, in statements after the EU Foreign Affairs Council (FAC).

More Details:

<http://www.balkaneu.com/kotzias-welcomes-shift-in-eu-policy-toward-egypt-in-statements-after-fac-in-brussels/>

- **Nigeria, Egypt Seek to Boost Trade Ties**

The Egyptian Ambassador-designate to Nigeria, Mr. Assem Hanafi, has expressed concern over the low trade volume between his country and Nigeria, calling for aggressively measures to improve the situation.

More Details:

<https://www.thisdaylive.com/index.php/2017/03/07/nigeria-egypt-seek-to-boost-trade-ties/>

- **Egypt hopes Chinese visitors can make up for Russian tourism decline**

Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Oleg Syromolotov told Sputnik News Feb. 22 that the missiles fired from the Sinai Peninsula toward the Israeli Red Sea city of Eilat could further complicate any decision to resume Russian tourist flights to Egypt.

More Details:

<http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2017/03/egypt-tourism-decline-russia-china.html>

- **ISIS murdering Coptic Christians on Egypt's Sinai Peninsula over faith**

The Coptic Christian community of Egypt's Sinai Peninsula is under siege from a growing number of militant Islamists, including ISIS members, who target them for death because of their faith

More Details:

<http://www.foxnews.com/world/2017/03/06/isis-murdering-coptic-christians-on-egypts-sinai-peninsula-over-faith.html>

- **Egypt's army chief-of-staff meets chairman of NATO military committee**

Egypt's army chief-of-staff, General Mahmoud Hegazy, met with General Petr Pavel, the chairman of NATO military committee, in Cairo on Monday to discuss the latest regional developments, the Egyptian armed forces announced.

More Details:

<http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/64/259425/-.aspx>

- **Iran hopes for closer ties with Egypt**

Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman hoped for the removal of obstacles on the way of stronger relations between Tehran and Cairo.

More Details:

<http://iran-daily.com/News/188827.html>

## 8. NORTH AFRICA

- **Ambassador urges Scottish firms to look at oil and gas opportunities in Algeria**

Mention Algeria in oil and gas circles these days and the deadly terrorist attack on the In Amenas gas plant more than four years ago is likely to spring to mind.

More details:

<https://www.energyvoice.com/oilandgas/africa/133298/ambassador-urges-scottish-firms-look-oil-gas-opportunities-algeria/>

- **Algeria to further curb import bill in 2017**

Algerian prime minister on Monday said the main challenge of his government in 2017 is to curb the North African nation's imports bill to around 30 billion U.S. dollars.

More details:

[http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-03/07/c\\_136107702.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-03/07/c_136107702.htm)

- **Sellal: Protecting citizens' purchasing power, a "red line not to cross"**

"We should protect the purchasing power of the Algerians, which is a red line not to cross," Prime Minister Abdelmalek Sellal said on Monday in Annaba at the closing of the 20th Tripartite meeting (the Government, Union and the Employers).

More details:

<http://en.aps.dz/economy/17162-sellal-protecting-citizens%E2%80%99-purchasing-power,-a-red-line-not-to-cross>

- **Libyan shareholders blame Uganda govt for UTL failure**

The Libyan Post, Telecommunications, and Information Technology Company (LPTIC) has blamed the Uganda government for failure to adopt the planned strategy that would have turned around Uganda Telecom.

More details:

<http://www.monitor.co.ug/News/National/Libyan-shareholders-blame-Uganda-govt-for-UTL-failure/688334-3839988-5q1b1cz/index.html>

- **Libya: enter Russia**

Since the Libyan civil war began, the question hovering over everything was – will Russia get involved? The answer to that question came when the chief of Libya's UN-created Government of National Accord (GNA), the so-called Prime Minister Fayez Serraj, met with Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov in Moscow.

More details:

<http://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20170307/opinion/Libya-enter-Russia.641672>

- **Moroccan Authorities Establish Controls on Gunpowder**

Security authorities have launched operations to establish strict controls on gunpowder, a chemical explosive used in the manufacture of bombs, reported the daily Al Ahdath Al Maghribia on Monday, March 6.

More details:

<https://www.moroccoworldnews.com/2017/03/210267/moroccan-authorities-establish-controls-gunpowder/>

- **Deal signed**

With eyes on September's federal elections and in need of a political win, German Chancellor Angela Merkel made her first official diplomatic visit to Tunisia on March 3, where she discussed the two countries' shared immigration concerns and sought to assure the German electorate that security is her first priority.

More details:

<https://news.vice.com/story/merkel-scores-political-win-by-getting-tunisia-to-speed-up-deportations-of-rejected-asylum-seekers>

- **LNA claims its retreat has stopped at Al-Uqaylah**

The Libyan National Army is putting a brave face on its ouster by the Benghazi Defence Brigades from the oil export terminals at Sidra and Ras Lanuf. It is reported to be concentrating forces around Brega while it holds the frontline further west at Al-Uqaylah.

More details:

<https://www.libyaherald.com/2017/03/06/lina-claims-its-retreat-has-stopped-at-al-uqaylah/>

- **Libyan National Committee continues meetings in Egypt**

As a part of the efforts exerted by Egypt to support a political settlement in Libya, the Libyan National Committee held a meeting on Monday in Cairo to discuss the latest developments regarding conditions in Libya and efforts to resume dialogue between the Libyan factions, the Egyptian army's spokesperson said in a statement.

More details:

<http://www.dailynewsegypt.com/2017/03/06/617440/>

## 9. AFGHANISTAN – PAKISTAN

- **India, Afghanistan creating unrest in Pakistan: Pakistani defence minister**

Defence minister Khawaja Asif on Tuesday alleged in Parliament that India and Afghanistan have joined hands to create unrest in Pakistan.

More details:

<http://www.livemint.com/Politics/fxgNdbpX1I5A5V2ujZgTlJ/India-Afghanistancreating-unrest-in-Pakistan-Pakistan-defe.html>

- **60 Armed Oppositions Killed, Wounded Due To ANP Operations**

Nearly 30 anti-government militias were killed and 30 others were wounded during mopping-up operations conducted by Afghan National Police (ANP) in six provinces of the country within the past 24 hours.

More details:

<http://www.bakhtarnews.com.af/eng/security/item/27804-60-armed-oppositions-killed-wounded-due-to-anp-operations.html>

- **Taliban behind emergence of more terrorist groups**

President of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, Mohammad Ashraf Ghani, while inaugurating the first joint session of the parliament's seventh year and 16th legal term, said Taliban was behind emergence of all terrorist groups in the country.

More details:

<http://thekabultimes.gov.af/index.php/editorial/13272-taliban-behind-emergence-of-more-terrorist-groups.html>

- **Afghan govt approves 8 contracts worth AFN 25 billion**

The Afghan government has approved at least eight contracts worth around AFN 25 billion, the Office of the President, ARG Palace said.

More details:

<http://www.khaama.com/afghan-govt-approves-8-contracts-worth-afn-25-billion-02347>

- **Minister Hakimi Discusses Parliamentary Elections with Officials of Electoral Bodies**

Eklil Hakimi, Minister of Finance met ambassadors and representatives of the United States of America, Germany, Norway, England, Japan, European Union and United State Agency for International Development in the presence of Najibullah Ahmadzai, head of the Independent Election Commission and Abdul Aziz Aryaee, head of the Electoral Complaints Commission in his office here yesterday, a statement from the ministry said.

More details:

<http://www.bakhtarnews.com.af/eng/politics/item/27798-minister-hakimi-discusses-parliamentary-elections-with-officials-of-electoral-bodies.html>

- **Afghan Taliban's political negotiators visit China**

The Afghan Taliban's senior political negotiators recently visited China on the invitation of the Chinese government, which has been making efforts to encourage the insurgent group to join the peace process, two Taliban officials have said.

More details:

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1348055/afghan-talibans-political-negotiators-visit-china/>

- **Pak-Afghan border rightfully closed**

Minister for Defence, Khawaja Muhammad Asif on Monday reiterated Pakistan's resolve to take every step required for national security and its defence and thwart every conspiracy to target 'our people in terrorist activities'.

More details:

<http://pakobserver.net/pak-afghan-border-rightfully-closed/>

- **Pakistan cannot progress without empowering woman, says Shahbaz**

Punjab Chief Minister Muhammad Shahbaz Sharif on Monday said the Punjab government had taken a lead in South Asia by issuing its first gender parity report and had worked tremendously for the betterment of women in the province.

More details:

<http://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2017/03/07/pakistan-cannot-progress-without-empowering-woman-says-shahbaz/>

- **Sanctions hindering Iran-Pak gas pipeline'**

Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Sheikh Aftab Ahmed on Monday informed the National Assembly that work on the Iran-Pakistan Gas Pipeline Project could not be started due to international sanctions on Iran.

More details:

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1318817/sanctions-hindering-iran-pak-gas-pipeline>

- **Investors to benefit from Pak economic boom**

Pakistan's High Commissioner to Canada Tariq Azim Khan has invited Canadian companies to benefit from the investment opportunities in Pakistan due to economic boom and demographic dividend.

More details:

<http://gulftoday.ae/portal/2d85d981-5d69-4b5d-bb01-8cfd2606ffa8.aspx>

## 10.TURKEY AND THE MIDDLE EAST

- **Turkey helps Syrian boy who lost both legs in airstrike**

A battery-operated wheelchair donated by the Turkish Red Crescent is making life easier for 10-year-old Abdulbasit Alsattuf who lost his legs during an airstrike in northwestern Syria's Idlib governorate, the aid agency said Tuesday. Alsattuf lost both his legs in an attack carried out by the Bashar al-Assad regime while he was playing in front of his house in February.

More Details:

<http://www.worldbulletin.net/turkey/185888/turkey-helps-syrian-boy-who-lost-both-legs-in-airstrike>

- **Turkey, Qatar vow to educate Syria's next generation**

Turkey and Qatar are jointly making efforts to educate Syria's next generation, Religious Affairs Directorate head Mehmet Gormez said Tuesday. Speaking at a meeting with Qatar's Sheikh Thani Ibn Abdullah Foundation for Humanitarian Services (RAF) head Ayed bin Dabssan al-Qahtani in the capital Ankara, Gormez said: "We have lost a certain number of [people from the] current generation. Now, we should work together to teach these [Syrian] children for the sake of saving the next generation."

More Details:

<http://aa.com.tr/en/education/turkey-qatar-vow-to-educate-syrias-next-generation/765688>

*\*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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