



# MIDDLE EAST DAILY BULLETIN

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## 1. IRAQ

- **Former US Prisoner now leading Iraq's interior ministry**

Just over 10 years ago, Qasim al-Araji was being arrested a second time by American forces in Iraq. The charges were serious: smuggling arms used to attack U.S. troops and involvement in an assassination cell at the height of sectarian violence that engulfed Iraq following the 2003 toppling of Saddam Hussein.

More Details:

[http://hosted.ap.org/dynamic/stories/M/ML\\_IRAQ\\_INTERIOR\\_MINISTER?SITE=AP&SECTION=HOME&TEMPLATE=DEFAULT&CTIME=2017-05-08-02-21-25](http://hosted.ap.org/dynamic/stories/M/ML_IRAQ_INTERIOR_MINISTER?SITE=AP&SECTION=HOME&TEMPLATE=DEFAULT&CTIME=2017-05-08-02-21-25)

- **Iraq's PM Says No US Troops after Defeat of Islamic State**

Iraq's prime minister has said there will be no lingering US combat troop presence in his country after the battle to remove the Islamic State (Daesh) is finished, contradicting earlier reports.

More Details;

<http://www.eurasiareview.com/08052017-iraqs-pm-says-no-us-troops-after-defeat-of-islamic-state/>

- **Japan contributes additional US\$16.7 million to stabilization and resilience in Iraq**

The Government of Japan has contributed an additional US\$16.7 million to UNDP's Funding Facility for Stabilization (FFS) and Iraq Crisis Response and Resilience Programme (ICRRP) to promote stabilization, recovery, and resilience-building in areas liberated from the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), and in areas with large displaced populations. This new funding brings Japan's total contribution to FFS and ICRRP close to US\$60 million since 2014.

More Details:

<http://reliefweb.int/report/iraq/japan-contributes-additional-us167-million-stabilization-and-resilience-iraq>

- **Iran in Talks with Iraq on Joint Fields**

Negotiations are underway with Iraq to form a joint technical committee to decide on the development of joint oil fields with the Arab neighbor, managing director of Iranian Central Oil Fields Company said.

More Details:

<https://financialtribune.com/articles/energy/63949/iran-in-talks-with-iraq-on-joint-fields>

- **Iraq's oil exports average 3.252 million bpd in April**

Iraq's daily oil exports averaged 3.252 million barrels per day (bpd) in April, down slightly from 3.259 million bpd the previous month, oil ministry spokesman said.

More Details:

<http://timesofoman.com/article/108443/Business/Iraq>

- **Ministry: more than 3000 IS militants killed in western Mosul offensive**

Security operations to retake western Mosul from Islamic State militants have killed 3320 militants since their launch in February 19th, said the Iraqi Interior Ministry on Monday.

More Details:

<http://www.iraqinews.com/iraq-war/interior-ministry-3000-militants-killed-since-start-western-mosul-offensive/>

- **Iraqi Sunni Leaders Call on Shi'ite Militias to Leave Mosul**

Iraqi Sunni factions have urged the withdrawal of the Shi'ite militias of Hashd al-Shaabi from Mosul, fearing sectarian conflicts following the liberation of the northern Iraqi city, a Kurdish lawmaker said.

More Details:

<http://www.basnews.com/index.php/en/news/iraq/348635>

- **ISIS suicide bombers attack in vain as Iraqi Army liberates another suburb in Mosul**

Due to new advances on Sunday, around 95% of Mosul city was brought under Iraqi Army control while ISIS insurgents remain bogged down in the northwestern sector, facing certain death.

More Details:

<https://www.almasdarnews.com/article/isis-suicide-bombers-attack-vain-iraqi-army-liberates-another-suburb-mosul/>

- **ISIS attacks base where U.S. advisers stationed in Iraq**

Multiple ISIS suicide bombers attacked a base in northern Iraq where U.S. military advisers are stationed, security sources said on Sunday.

More Details:

<http://en.alalam.ir/news/1964543>

- **‘We Still Don’t Have Full Trust in the Army:’ Iraqis Fear Government Will Cut and Run Against ISIS Again**

Some residents of recently liberated Mosul fear the Iraqi Army may abandon them once again in the face of ISIS, Loveday Morris of The Washington Post reports.

More Details:

<http://dailycaller.com/2017/05/07/we-still-dont-have-full-trust-in-the-army-iraqis-fear-government-will-cut-and-run-against-isis-again/>

- **Iraqi Kurdistan signs tourism memorandum with 16 countries**

During the three days of Erbil Tourism Exhibition last week 203 contracts were signed with 16 other countries to facilitate travel for tourists to and from Iraq’s Kurdistan Region, the tourism office said.

More Details:

<http://ekurd.net/kurdistan-tourism-memorandum-2017-05-07>

- **ISIL 'Police Chief' Arrested by Iraqi Forces in Right Bank of Mosul**

The Iraqi Army's 9th Division announced the arrest of a senior ISIL member acting as the so-called "police chief" of the terror group in Mosul's southern region of Hamam al-Alil.

More Details:

<http://en.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13960217001213>

- **Private Firm in Charge of US’ F-16s in Iraq Denies Prostitution Allegations**

In the wake of revelations of widespread corruption within the civilian logistics and supply networks of the US military around the world, new allegations have pinpointed sex trafficking, smuggling and consistent security violations by a US military contractor at an air base in Iraq.

More Details:

<https://sputniknews.com/military/201705071053368543-us-contractor-denies-prostitution-ring/>

- **ISIS Attacks Kurdish Base; 88 Killed in Iraq**

In Mosul, nine policemen were killed and three were wounded in a quadruple suicide attack. A missile attack killed four people and wounded nine more. An airstrike killed one person and wounded three more. Security forces killed 46 militants, including a commander. Fourteen more militants were killed.

More Details:

<http://original.antiwar.com/updates/2017/05/07/isis-attacks-kurdish-base-88-killed-in-iraq/>

- **Raw: Iraqi forces launch rockets as they battle to enter Mosul in the fight against ISIS**

Fighting continues between Iraqi forces and Islamic State group militants at the northwestern edge of Mosul where security forces have opened a new frontline in their bid to retake the city.

More Details:

<https://www.tvnz.co.nz/one-news/world/raw-iraqi-forces-launch-rockets-they-battle-enter-mosul-in-fight-against-isis-v1>

- **IDPs not given deadline to leave Kirkuk: KRG spokesperson**

A spokesman for the Kirkuk Security (Asayish) Department on Sunday denied allegations made by Human Rights Watch (HRW) that the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) authorities in Kirkuk are forcing internally displaced Turkmen to leave the city.

More Details:

<http://www.kurdistan24.net/en/news/f6af1e39-e9a8-436d-89c3-c9a3ec52653e/IDPs-not-given-deadline-to-leave-Kirkuk--KRG-spokesperson->

- **IS car bombs kill 9 police officers in west Mosul**

At least nine security officials were killed and three others injured Saturday in Islamic State bomb attacks in west of Mosul, police told Anadolu Agency.

More Details:

<http://thepeninsulaqatar.com/article/07/05/2017/IS-car-bombs-kill-9-police-officers-in-west-Mosul>

- **Iraq: Kirkuk Security Forces Expel Displaced Turkmen**

Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) authorities in Kirkuk are forcing internally displaced Sunni Turkmen to leave the city, Human Rights Watch said today.

More Details:

<https://www.hrw.org/news/2017/05/07/iraq-kirkuk-security-forces-expel-displaced-turkmen>

- **Islamic State mounts fierce resistance on new Mosul front**

Iraqi forces faced stiff resistance from Islamic State in northwest Mosul on Sunday after opening a new front against the militants there in a push to rout them from the city after seven months of fighting.

More Details:

[http://www.shafaaq.com/en/En\\_NewsReader/612e9c65-cb7e-4651-aea3-db7aeaa025c8](http://www.shafaaq.com/en/En_NewsReader/612e9c65-cb7e-4651-aea3-db7aeaa025c8)

## 2. SYRIA

- **Moscow and Washington ready to reactivate memo on ensuring safety in the Syrian airspace**

Chief of Russian General Staff Valery Gerasimov and US counterpart Joseph Dunford confirmed, during a phone call, the sides' readiness to fully restore the memorandum on ensuring safety and preventing incidents in the airspace of Syria, the Russian Defense Ministry reported.

More Details

<http://sana.sy/en/?cat=106>

- **Foreign ISIS Radicals in Syria Turn Against Tabqa Agreement**

Foreign ISIS radicals turned on Sunday against an agreement reached with the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) to withdraw from Tabqa in the Raqqa province and decided to continue fighting in two neighborhoods inside the Syrian city.

More Details

<http://english.aawsat.com/p-astatih/news-middle-east/foreign-isis-radicals-syria-turn-tabqa-agreement>

- **Kurdish-Led Forces Free Watani Hospital from Daesh near Al Tabqah in North Syria**

The Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) have liberated Watani hospital from Daesh terrorist group to the west from Syria's northern city of Al Tabqah as part of the operation on the city's liberation, media reported Sunday.

More Details

<https://sputniknews.com/middleeast/201705081053369252-sdf-free-watani-hospital/>

- **Deal sees Nusra fighters evacuate from Syria's Yarmouk**

In deal with Syrian army, fighters from group formerly known as Jabhat al-Nusra are transferred from Damascus to Idlib

More Details

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/05/deal-sees-nusra-fighters-evacuate-syria-yarmouk-170507144137371.html>

- **Syrian army advances in spite of deal to cut violence, monitor says**

The Syrian army seized control of the village of al-Zalakiyat north of Hama on Sunday amid a heavy bombardment, a war monitor reported, in spite of a deal brokered by Russia, Syria's main foreign backer, to reduce fighting.

More Details

<http://www.middleeasteye.net/news/syrian-army-advances-spite-deal-cut-violence-monitor-says-312590634>

- **Are Syria's 'De-Escalation Zones' too Vague to Work?**

The Russian plan to create safe zones in Syria, which came into effect on Saturday, is the latest in a string of efforts to ease the country's horrendous violence. After past failures, this deal provides for the first time a mechanism to observe the cease-fire: Russian, Iranian and Turkish troops are to monitor compliance on the ground.

More Details

<http://www.albawaba.com/news/are-syria%E2%80%99s-%E2%80%98de-escalation-zones%E2%80%99-too-vague-work-971350>

- **Syria Fighting Eases as Safe Zones Plan Begins**

Fighting subsided in Syria on Saturday after a deal signed by government backers Russia and Iran and rebel supporter Turkey to create four "de-escalation zones" began to take effect. The multi-phase plan, signed Thursday in the Kazakh capital Astana, is one of the more ambitious efforts to end Syria's six-year conflict.

More Details

<http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/229634-syria-fighting-eases-as-safe-zones-plan-begins>

- **Syrian army advances despite deal to cut violence, monitor says**

The Syrian army seized control of the village of al-Zalakiyat north of Hama on Sunday amid a heavy bombardment, a war monitor reported, despite a deal brokered by Russia, Syria's main foreign backer, to reduce fighting.

More Details

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-fighting-idUSKBN1830IF>

- **Injured Syrian who swam to Greece sets up charity to help other refugees**

"I know what it's like to make a new life in another country. To have no one. I am the best placed person to help," Omar Alshakal says, speaking carefully in English, a language he is almost fluent in despite only beginning to learn last year.

More Details

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/syrian-omar-alshakal-injured-swam-greece-charity-help-refugee-4-refugees-a7718571.html>

### 3. IRAN

- **Iran's Army Criticizes Rouhani over 'Ballistic' Comments**

Iranian armed forces spokesman General Masoud Jazayeri criticized on Saturday President Hassan Rouhani for speaking against the country's ballistic program during the second television presidential debate held in Iran last Friday.

More Details

<http://english.aawsat.com/theaawsat/world-news/iranian-armed-forces-chief-criticizes-rouhani-ballistic-comments>

- **Iran minister warns Saudi Arabia after 'battle' comments: Tasnim**

Iran will hit back at most of Saudi Arabia with the exception of Islam's holiest places if the kingdom does anything "ignorant", Tehran's defense minister was quoted as saying on Sunday after a Saudi prince threatened to move the "battle" to Iran.

More Details

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-iran-saudi-minister-idUSKBN1830Y7>

- **Ayatollah Khamenei: Iran Not to Abide by UNESCO 2030 Agenda**

"Why should a so-called International body-- which is definitely infiltrated by the superpowers—have the right to make decisions for the nations of the world with various cultures," Ayatollah Khamenei said in Tehran on Sunday, addressing a large group of teachers and university students on the occasion of teachers day in Iran.

More Details

<http://en.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13960217001106>

- **Leader: Any voter dereliction would harm Iran**

Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei says any dereliction on the part of voters in Iran's elections this month would harm the country, urging a massive turnout to disappoint the enemies.

More Details

<http://www.presstv.ir/Detail/2017/05/07/520889/Iran-Leader-UNESCO-Presidential-Elections>

- **Ties with Afghanistan safeguard Iran's security, interests**

Speaking to reporters at the end of his one-day visit to Kabul, Iranian Minister of Foreign Affairs Mohammad Javad Zarif touched upon achievements of the trip saying "good negotiations were held with high-ranking officials of the neighboring country. We set a record by holding fruitful meetings with Afghanistan's President Ashraf Ghani and Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah, Foreign Minister Salahuddin Rabbani, former Afghan President Hamid Karzai as well as National Security Adviser Mohammad Haneef Atmar all within one day."

More Details

<http://en.mehrnews.com/news/125265/Ties-with-Afghanistan-safeguard-Iran-s-security-interests>

- **13 more bodies of Iranian trapped miners found**

Rescuers have retrieved bodies of thirteen miners trapped under the rubbles caused by a deadly explosion on Wednesday in a coal mine in an Iran northern city, says an official.

More Details

<http://www.irna.ir/en/News/82520856/>

- **Zarif: Strategic roadmap with Afghanistan in the pipeline**

“Iran and Afghanistan agreed to assign five committees to work out a strategic document on political-security, economic, educational and cultural, water and environment and refugee issues,” Zarif told reporters.

More Details

<http://www.tehrantimes.com/news/413241/Zarif-Strategic-roadmap-with-Afghanistan-in-the-pipeline>

- **Iran's Khamenei: Islam and Koran should be basis of education, not west**

Iran’s supreme leader on Sunday criticized the government of President Hassan Rouhani for promoting a "Western-influenced" United Nations education plan which his hardline allies have said contradicts Islamic principles. Ayatollah Ali Khamenei's remarks came ahead of May 19 polls, in which the president is seeking re-election.

More Details

<http://www.jpost.com/Middle-East/Iran-News/Irans-Khamenei-Islam-and-Koran-should-be-basis-of-education-not-West-489983>

- **Iran Leader urges high turnout in upcoming elections**

Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei has called on the nation to turn out in the May 19 elections en masse, saying this would help boost the country’s might, grandeur and immunity, PressTV reported.

More Details

<http://en.trend.az/iran/politics/2751191.html>

## 4. ISRAEL – PALESTINE

- **Bill to declare Israel a Jewish state back on national agenda**

Israel’s Cabinet breathed new life Sunday into efforts to anchor in law the country’s status as a Jewish state, legislation Palestinians have described as an obstacle to peace. If the bill eventually becomes law, Arabic would be defined as having special status, while “its speakers have the right to language-accessible state services,” though it would not be an official language, Haaretz newspaper reported. A ministerial committee approved a revised version of a bill first proposed in 2011 that declares the “State of Israel is the national home of the Jewish people,” its author, Avi Dichter of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s right-wing Likud Party, wrote on Facebook.

More Details:

<http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Middle-East/2017/May-08/404922-bill-to-declare-israel-a-jewish-state-back-on-national-agenda.ashx>

- **Israeli embassy in Egypt closed for past 5 months**

The Hebrew newspaper Yedioth Ahronoth reported that the security situation in Egypt prompted the closure of the embassy, with Israel's ambassador to Cairo, David Govrin, and his diplomatic staff working from Jerusalem al-Quds. According to the report, the additional pay they receive for working abroad has been retroactively canceled for the months they've worked in Israel.

More Details:

<http://www.presstv.com/Detail/2017/05/08/520985/Israeli-embassy-in-Egypt-closed-for-5-months>

- **Israeli forces detain 13 Palestinians in predawn military raids**

Israeli forces carried out predawn military raids across the occupied West Bank on Monday and detained at least 13 Palestinians, according to Palestinians and Israeli sources. Local sources told Ma'an that Israeli forces raided the southern West Bank city of Hebron and detained three Palestinians, identified as Munjid Nadir Qawasmah, Sayf al-Islam Qafisha, and Malik al-Natsha. Qawasmah, the sources said, was released from Israeli custody only a week ago after a nine-month imprisonment.

More Details:

<http://www.maannews.com/Content.aspx?ID=776922>

- **The UN is no longer the Palestinians' playground'**

Israel's Ambassador to the United Nations, Danny Danon, told Arutz Sheva on Sunday that in order to achieve peace, the Palestinian Authority (PA) must return to the negotiating table. "The Palestinians are lying all the time. Abu Mazen lied to President Trump when he told him that he's educating Palestinian kids towards peace. They are inciting. They promote terrorism. They pay salaries to terrorists who sit in our prisons," said Danon.

More Details:

<http://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx/229266>

- **New Hamas chief latest step toward international acceptance: analysts**

Gaza City, Palestinian Territories: Ismail Haniya's election as Hamas chief is another sign that the Islamist movement is seeking to soften its image and show it can offer a viable alternative to

Mahmud Abbas, analysts said. Considered a terrorist group by the United States and the European Union, Hamas has taken steps in recent days that are seen as a bid to ease its international isolation while not alienating hard-liners within the movement.

More Details:

<http://www.arabnews.com/node/1096226/middle-east>

- **Israeli Soldiers Invade Palestinian Lands In Central Gaza**

Several armored Israeli military vehicles, and bulldozers, invaded during morning hours, Sunday, Palestinian farmlands, close to the border fence, east of Deir al-Balah, in the central part of the Gaza Strip. The invasion was carried out by three tanks and three bulldozers that came from Kissufim military base, across the border fence, southeast of Deir al-Balah.

More Details:

<http://imemc.org/article/israeli-soldiers-invade-palestinian-lands-in-central-gaza/>

- **Israeli Forces Shoot, Kill Palestinian Woman**

Israeli military forces have shot dead a young Palestinian woman in the Old City of the occupied East Jerusalem (al-Quds) for allegedly attempting to carry out a stabbing attack. Israeli police spokeswoman, Luba al-Samri, said the Palestinian woman was shot after she purportedly approached Israeli police officers stationed at the Damascus Gate entrance, while holding a knife. Israeli police spokesman, Micky Rosenfeld, said in a statement that no police officers had been injured in the alleged attack.

More Details:

<https://www.tasnimnews.com/en/news/2017/05/08/1400882/israeli-forces-shoot-kill-palestinian-woman>

- **Israel Opens First East Jerusalem Police Station - in a Palestinian Refugee Camp**

The Israel Police dedicated a new police station at the entrance to the Shoafat Palestinian refugee camp in East Jerusalem on Sunday. The first police station in East Jerusalem; the new building is part of a broader plan to improve police services in the capital. According to the Israel Police, the emphasis of the Integrated Service Center, its official name, will be on providing services to residents rather than local law enforcement. It will house offices for municipal services and, in the future, branches of the National Insurance Institute and the Interior Ministry as well.

More Details:

<http://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/1.787778>

- **Private equity investment in Israel totals \$316 million in 1Q**

Private equity investment in Israel rose 22 percent to \$316 million in 24 transactions in the first quarter of the year from the \$260 million invested in the same quarter a year earlier, a new survey by Israel's IVC Research Center and Shibolet & Co. corporate law firm shows. The number of deals was up 26% from the 19 transactions recorded in the first quarter of last year.

More Details:

<http://www.timesofisrael.com/private-equity-investment-in-israel-totals-316-million-in-1q/>

- **Israeli politicians: 'French democracy won, antisemitism was defeated'**

Relieved Israelis on Sunday night welcomed the election of Emmanuel Macron to the French Presidency. He defeated far-right candidate Marine Le Pen to become the youngest person to hold that post since Napoleon over 200 years ago. "I look forward to working with President-elect Macron to confront the common challenges and seize the common opportunities facing our two democracies," Netanyahu said.

More Details:

<http://www.jpost.com/israel-news/politics-and-diplomacy/israeli-politicians-french-democracy-won-antisemitism-was-defeated-490078>

## 5. JORDAN and LEBANON

- **Report: Incessant Efforts to Unravel Electoral Law Difficulties**

Ceaseless coordination between the Center House and Ain el-Tineh are ongoing in order to find a new electoral law to rule Lebanon's parliamentary polls scheduled in May, in light of looming deadlines mainly the end of the parliament's term in June, al-Joumhouria daily reported on Monday. Prime Minister Saad Hariri has intensified deliberations with various political parties in that regard, said the daily.

More Details:

<http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/229676-report-incessant-efforts-to-unravel-electoral-law-difficulties>

- **Hezbollah ghosts behind every tree, rock waiting for Zionist soldiers**

The zone is one of the toughest border points on geographic, climatic and military levels for comprising valleys, cliffs, high hills, rocks and forests. The area is also covered with fog in most of the days, in addition to including fortified military sites that are linked with military routes passing mainly

through forests, and partially appear to the Lebanese side. Moreover, the area is considered a Lebanese territory occupied by Israeli forces, making it an open area to possible operations by the Islamic Resistance fighters at any time, unlike other border points along the Palestinian and Syrian territories.

More Details:

[http://en.abna24.com/news/middle-east/hezbollah-ghosts-behind-every-tree-rock-waiting-for-zionist-soldiers\\_828389.html](http://en.abna24.com/news/middle-east/hezbollah-ghosts-behind-every-tree-rock-waiting-for-zionist-soldiers_828389.html)

- **Raad Promises Full Proportional Representation Law before June 20**

The country will have an electoral law based on “full proportional representation” before June 20, head of Hezbollah's Loyalty to Resistance bloc MP Mohammed Raad told LBCI TV on Sunday. June 20 is the date when the extended term of the current parliament will expire.

More Details:

<http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/229659-raad-promises-full-proportional-representation-law-before-june-20>

- **Army: Enemy gunboat infiltrates into territorial waters off Ras Naqoura**

A gunboat belonging to the Israeli enemy violated yesterday at two different intervals, between 4:45 am and 7.22, the Lebanese territorial waters off Ras Naqoura, and infiltrated some 334 meters into the sea , a communiqué by the Lebanese army indicated on Sunday. Violations are a matter of coordination between the Lebanese Armed Forces and the UNIFIL.

More Details:

<http://nna-leb.gov.lb/en/show-news/78961/Army-Enemy-gunboat-infiltrates-into-territorial-waters-off-Ras-Naqoura>

- **Lebanon battles pollution with first zero-waste project**

Lebanon's first zero-waste management programme was launched in 2016 and has helped tackle the country's rubbish crisis. Workers separate recyclables from biodegradable material by hand and natural waste is made into compost.

More Details:

<http://www.aljazeera.com/video/news/2017/05/lebanon-battles-pollution-zero-waste-project-170507092932429.html>

- **Singapore FM meets Jordan King, reaffirms bilateral ties**

Foreign Affairs Minister Vivian Balakrishnan met King Abdullah II Al Hussein of Jordan on Saturday (May 6), reaffirming warm ties between the two countries. Meeting on the first day of a working visit to the kingdom, the two exchanged views on developments in the Middle East and Southeast Asia, including ways to counter radicalisation and violent extremism, said a press release by the Singapore Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Sunday.

More Details:

<http://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/singapore/singapore-fm-meets-jordan-king-reaffirms-bilateral-ties-8825708>

- **Six Polling Stations Open across Lebanon to Elect French President**

The balloting operation for the French presidential elections commenced on Sunday morning at the French Embassy headquarters in Beirut, to choose between the two principal candidates Emmanuel Macron and Marine Le Pen. In this framework, six polling stations opened at 8 am on Sunday morning across the Lebanese territories, notably: three polling stations in Beirut, one in Sidon, one in Tripoli and one in Jounieh.

More Details:

<http://english.almanar.com.lb/257464>

- **Power delegation basis of development**

HRH Prince Hassan, president of the Arab Thought Forum (ATF) on Sunday attended a lecture titled "Empowerment and Power Delegation for Citizenship". During the lecture, held at the Jordan University of Science and Technology (JUST), the prince delivered a speech, in which he stressed that education is a human right and the basis of human and community development, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.

More Details:

<http://jordantimes.com/news/local/power-delegation-basis-development-%E2%80%94-prince-hassan>

- **Hasbani says LF open to any election law that secures proper representation**

Deputy Prime Minister and Health Minister Ghassan Hasbani on Sunday said that the Lebanese Forces is open to any vote law format, provided it secures equity and proper representation for all segments of the Lebanese society. Minister Hasbani's fresh words came in an interview to "Voice of Lebanon" Radio Station, where he underlined the need to reach an agreement over the new vote law before the end of the House of Parliament's mandate on June 20.

More Details:

<http://nna-leb.gov.lb/en/show-news/78955/Hasbani-says-LF-open-to-any-election-law-that-secures-proper-representation>

## 6. ARABIAN PENINSULA AND THE GULF OF BASRA

- **Oman's minister in Pakistan on two-day visit**

Minister Responsible for Foreign Affairs of the Sultanate of Oman Yousuf Bin Alawi Bin Abdullah arrived in Pakistan on Sunday on a two-day visit.

More details:

<http://dailytimes.com.pk/pakistan/08-May-17/omans-minister-in-pakistan-on-two-day-visit>

- **Leader of Hezbollah al-Nujaba Warns Bahraini Gov't against Disrespect for Sheikh Qassim**

Sheikh Akram al-Kaabi, the leader of Hezbollah al-Nujaba, a major Iraqi Shiite resistance movement fighting the ISIL, warned the Bahraini government against showing disrespectful behavior towards distinguished Shiite cleric Sheikh Issa Qassim, who has been stripped of his citizenship by the ruling al-Khalifa dynasty.

More details:

<http://en.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13960217001475>

- **Aden's Governor: Improving Services, Fighting Terrorism are my Priorities**

Yemeni President Abed Rabbu Mansour Hadi has elected a new governor Abdulaziz al-Maflihi following Aidarous Zoubeydi who was appointed an ambassador at the Foreign Ministry. Maflihi announced that his priorities for the coming period is reforming the services Aden, especially water, electricity and roads.

More details:

<http://english.aawsat.com/arafat-adhal/news-middle-east/adens-governor-improving-services-fighting-terrorism-priorities>

- **Doctors in Yemen Warn of Possible Cholera Epidemic**

The medical charity Doctors Without Borders (MSF) is warning of a burgeoning cholera epidemic in Yemen. "Two years into the war, the health care system has collapsed, hospitals are destroyed ... and government employees' salaries have not been paid," MSF spokesman.

More Details:

<http://www.voanews.com/a/yemen-cholera/3841641.html>

- **Qatar and Pakistan to enhance business ties**

Minister of Commerce of Pakistan, Khurram Dastgir Khan, yesterday met with Minister of Economy and Commerce H E Sheikh Ahmed bin Jassim bin Mohammed Al Thani. Pakistan's Minister for Commerce Engineer Khurram Dastagir Khan is on a two-day visit to Qatar along with a delegation of Pakistani businessmen.

More details:

<http://thepeninsulaqatar.com/article/08/05/2017/Qatar-and-Pakistan-to-enhance-business-ties>

- **Sheikh Mohammed issues Decree moving MBRCLD under Dubai Executive Council**

In his capacity as Ruler of Dubai, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE, His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid al Maktoum, has issued a Decree moving the Mohammed bin Rashid Centre for Leadership Development, MBRCLD, under the Dubai Executive Council.

More detail:

<http://www.emirates247.com/news/government/sheikh-mohammed-issues-decree-moving-mbrcld-under-dubai-executive-council-2017-05-08-1.652562>

- **Iran defence minister threatens to annihilate Saudi Arabia except for Mecca and Medina**

Iran's Defence Minister Hossein Dehghan has warned that all of Saudi Arabia would be destroyed with the exception of Mecca and Medina if the theocratic kingdom chooses to make any "ignorant" move in the fragile Middle East region. His comments come as a sharp rebuke to Saudi Arabia's Deputy Crown Prince Muhammad bin Salman, who warned of moving the "battle" to Iran.

More details:

<http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/iran-defence-minister-threatens-annihilate-saudi-arabia-except-mecca-medina-1620452>

- **Trump goes to Riyadh**

US President Donald Trump's decision to make Saudi Arabia his first foreign stop on his first trip abroad reflects the importance his administration has given to courting the Saudis. There are useful lessons to be learned from previous presidents' trips to the kingdom about how to successfully court the royal family.

More details:

<http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2017/05/trump-visit-saudi-arabia-king-salman-relationship-fdr.html>

- **Saudi oil minister Falih confident output cut deal will be extended by 6 months**

Saudi energy minister Khalid al-Falih said Monday at an industry conference in Kuala Lumpur that he was confident that the crude oil output cut deal will be extended by six months or more as the market was moving towards rebalancing.

More details:

<https://www.platts.com/latest-news/oil/kualalumpur/saudi-oil-minister-falih-confident-output-cut-27826884>

- **Saudi King Salman congratulates Emmanuel Macron on French presidential win**

Saudi Arabia's King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud has sent a cable of congratulations to Emmanuel Macron on his election as president of France.

More details:

<https://english.alarabiya.net/en/News/gulf/2017/05/08/Saudi-King-Salman-congratulates-Emmanuel-Macron-on-French-presidential-win.html>

## 7. EGYPT

- **Israeli embassy in Egypt closed for past 5 months**

Israel's embassy in Cairo has been closed for the past five months over alleged security issues in a move described by Egypt as "strange and inexplicable".

More details:

<http://www.presstv.com/Detail/2017/05/08/520985/Israeli-embassy-in-Egypt-closed-for-5-months>

- **If the Bond Market Could Decide, Egypt Would Be Set for Upgrade**

With its finances in tatters, a credit upgrade was out of the question for Egypt before it secured an IMF loan agreement. Fast-forward six months, and it's already won promotion in the bond market.

More details:

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2017-05-07/if-the-bond-market-could-decide-egypt-would-be-set-for-upgrade>

- **Former Obama DHS Official on ISIS Slaughtering Egyptian Christians: 'What Goes Around, Comes Around'**

A former Obama administration official at the Department of Homeland Security said Sunday that when it comes to the Islamic State slaughtering Egyptian Christians, "what goes around, comes around."

More details:

<http://dailycaller.com/2017/05/07/former-obama-dhs-official-on-isis-slaughtering-egyptian-christians-what-goes-around-comes-around/>

- **Two Indian warships visit Egyptian port city**

Two Indian warships have engaged extensively in professional and social interactions with the Egyptian navy during their port call to Alexandria as part of Indian Navy's overseas deployment to the Mediterranean Sea and the west coast of Africa.

More details:

<http://www.thestatesman.com/india/two-indian-warships-visit-egyptian-port-city-1494217903.html>

- **Egypt parliament passes investment law**

Egypt's parliament on Sunday adopted a law whose aim is to attract foreign investors to the country as authorities seek to redress its struggling economy.

More details:

<http://www.france24.com/en/20170507-egypt-parliament-passes-investment-law>

- **Cairo rejects Sudan’s description of Egyptian presence in Halayeb as “military occupation”**

The Egyptian government has lodged an objection with the United Nations against the maritime baselines declared by Sudan last March saying it wouldn’t recognise any action taken by Khartoum or any international agreement that affects its sovereignty over Halayeb region.

More details:

<http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article62390>

- **Together We Are Stronger: Sisi Meets Kuwaiti Prince**

Egypt's President Abdel-Fattah El-Sisi held a meeting with Kuwaiti Prince Sabah Al-Ahmed Al-Sabah at the prince's Bayan palace on Sunday in Kuwait, state news agency MENA reported. The meeting saw a discussion on enhancing relations between the two countries as well as methods of consolidating Arab efforts.

More details:

<http://www.albawaba.com/news/together-we-are-stronger-sisi-meets-kuwaiti-prince-971434>

- **Western media dead set on conveying gloomy picture of Egypt: Foreign Ministry spokesperson**

An article attacking western media outlet's coverage of Egypt's internal affairs, written in English by the Foreign Ministry spokesperson, was published on Sunday on the ministry's official Facebook page. Ahmed Abu Zeid's article, titled "Egypt ... retelling the untold story", stated that despite Egypt regaining its natural role among world's countries and building a democratic state that embodies the values of modernity and enlightenment, numerous western media outlets continue to paint a gloomy picture of Egypt.

More details:

<http://www.egyptindependent.com//news/western-media-dead-set-conveying-gloomy-picture-egypt-foreign-ministry-spokesperson>

- **Lack of financial inclusion impedes economic growth: UNB-E vice chairperson**

The lack of financial inclusion hinders economic growth and deprives citizens of better job and life opportunities, says Mohamed Nasr Abdeen, vice chairperson of the Union National Bank Egypt (UNB-E).

More details:

<http://www.dailynewsegypt.com/2017/05/08/lack-financial-inclusion-impedes-economic-growth-unb-e-vice-chairperson/>

- **Daesh gunmen shot dead a man in Egypt's Sinai**

Gunmen have shot dead a Christian man inside a barbershop in Egypt's northern Sinai, security officials said on Sunday - the latest attack on Christians in the turbulent region contested by a local affiliate of the extremist Daesh group.

More details:

<http://gulftoday.ae/portal/092bd9eb-4e05-498c-b478-6988409bb729.aspx>

## 8. NORTH AFRICA

- **Algeria summons Tunisia envoy over 'communist state' remark**

Algeria on Sunday summoned Tunisia's ambassador in Algiers a few days after a Tunisian minister described Algeria as a communist state, state news agency APS said. The North African neighbours usually have strong security and economic ties with Algeria coordinating with Tunisia to combat Islamist militancy in the region.

More Details:

<http://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-algeria-tunisia-idUKKBN183126?rpc=401&>

- **Syrian refugees trapped on Algerian-Moroccan border in abysmal conditions: HRW**

Algerian and Moroccan border authorities appear to be blocking two groups of Syrian asylum seekers from leaving the border area near the Moroccan city of Figuig, Human Rights Watch (HRW) said on Friday.

More Details:

<http://aranews.net/2017/05/syrian-refugees-trapped-on-algerian-moroccan-border-in-abysmal-conditions-hrw/>

- **Qatar Chamber hosts Moroccan delegation**

Qatar Chamber (QC), yesterday held discussions with the visiting business and investment delegation from Morocco. The meeting reviewed means of boosting bilateral trade and investment relations in major sectors.

More Details:

<http://thepeninsulaqatar.com/article/08/05/2017/Qatar-Chamber-hosts-Moroccan-delegation>

- **MENA markets tumble in line with oil prices**

Most of the MENA bourses closed in the negative territory for the month of April barring Morocco, Abu Dhabi and Saudi Arabia that gained 2.3 per cent, 1.8 per cent and 0.2 per cent respectively.

More Details:

<http://ameinfo.com/money/markets/mena-markets-tumble-line-oil-prices/>

- **Emirates Human Rights Association participates in international symposium in Tunis**

Emirates Human Rights Association (EHRA), has participated in an international symposium held in Tunis entitled, "Protection of People with Disabilities During Wars and Conflicts."

More Details:

<http://wam.ae/en/details/1395302612564>

- **Tunisia victim's family slam horror movie American Assassin for echoing terror attack with beach shooting**

The family of British victims who died in the Tunisia terror attacks have slammed a movie which features a terrorist gun massacre on a beach. American Assassin shows tourists running for their lives as two men open fire with rifles in a holiday assault. The scene has disturbing echoes of IS fanatic Seifeddine Rezgui slaughtering 38 sunbathing tourists – including four Scots – with a Kalashnikov in June 2015.

More Details:

<http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/tunisia-victims-family-slam-horror-10372307>

- **Tunisia faces toxic landfill disaster - and no one is stopping the rot**

Ridha Trabelsi looks out over his village of Borj Chakir, a settlement on the outskirts of Tunis once renowned for its olive groves, and considers how things have changed. The crops are gone, subsumed by one of the country's largest landfills and its mountain of rotting waste that grows every day.

More Details:

<http://www.middleeasteye.net/news/world-bank-funds-tunisian-rubbish-dump-which-leaves-village-sick-1293932759>

- **Spanish naval ship saves 651 migrants in Mediterranean**

Spain's defense ministry says a Spanish navy ship has rescued 651 migrants trying to cross the Mediterranean from North Africa to Europe.

More Details:

[https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/europe/spanish-naval-ship-saves-651-migrants-in-mediterranean/2017/05/06/f72368e4-326d-11e7-a335-fa0ae1940305\\_story.html?utm\\_term=.8005e26d063e](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/europe/spanish-naval-ship-saves-651-migrants-in-mediterranean/2017/05/06/f72368e4-326d-11e7-a335-fa0ae1940305_story.html?utm_term=.8005e26d063e)

- **Libyan Islamic State leader killed in security offensive west of Mosul**

A Libyan senior leader of the Islamic State was killed in western Mosul on Sunday as Iraqi security forces sweep through districts on a new axis of operations taken last week. Federal Police chief, Lt. Gen. Shaker Jawdat, said Khaled ibn al-Waleed, a prominent IS leader, and five of his sentry, were killed when security troops pounded the group's main police headquarter in the city.

More Details:

<http://www.iraqinews.com/iraq-war/libyan-islamic-state-leader-killed-security-offensive-west-mosul/>

- **. Messahel in Ghadames for Algerian initiative to resolve Libya's political deadlock**

The Algerian Minister of Maghreb and African Affairs Abdelkader Messahel arrived in Ghadames on Sunday to meet with officials and discuss the Libyan Political Agreement.

More Details:

<http://www.libyanexpress.com/messahel-in-ghadames-for-algerian-initiative-to-resolve-libyas-political-deadlock/>

## 9. AFGHANISTAN – PAKISTAN

- **Pakistan-Afghanistan relations tense after border clashes**

Already frosty relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan have taken a nosedive, following a cross-border battle between the two sides. At least 11 people were killed and dozens were wounded in the exchange of gunfire. Pakistan has shut down one of its border crossings with Afghanistan in the wake of the incident. Press TV's Javed Rana has more details from Islamabad.

More Details:

<http://www.presstv.com/Detail/2017/05/07/520843/PakistanAfghanistan-relations-tense-border-clashes>

- **Afghanistan Strongly Rejects Pakistan's Claim of Killing 50 Afghan Soldiers**

The Afghan government in a press release strongly rejected the claims made by a Pakistan Frontier Corps General in the media that nearly 50 Afghan security personnel lost their lives as result of Pakistani retaliation in Chaman.

More Details:

<http://ariananews.af/afghanistan-strongly-rejects-pakistans-claim-of-killing-50-afghan-soldiers/>

- **Pak-Afghan border: Pakistan, Afghanistan agreed to hold demarcation survey**

Pakistani and Afghan military officials met here on Sunday and decided to determine geographical borders. FC Commander North Sector Brigadier Nadeem Sohail led the Pakistani side while Col Sharif headed the Afghan delegation. The meeting, attended by geological survey teams from both the neighbouring countries, took place at the Bab-e-Dosti.

More Details:

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/latest/203059-Pak-Afghan-border-Pakistan-Afghanistan-agreed-to-hold-demarcation-survey>

- **Russia joins Pakistan for peace efforts in Afghanistan: CG**

Recalling that on the political plane, Russia and Pakistan have joined hands to bring stability in Afghanistan and peace in the region, the Russian consul general Oleg Avedeev felt happy that ties between the two countries have been growing steadily, and a new turn around, which is indeed positive had already begun to unfold.

More Details:

<http://pakobserver.net/russia-joins-pakistan-peace-efforts-afghanistan-cg/>

- **Daesh Afghanistan leader killed: US, Afghan officials**

The head of Daesh in Afghanistan — believed to be the mastermind behind several high-profile attacks including an assault on a military hospital that claimed at least 50 lives — has been killed, US and Afghan officials said.

More Details:

<http://www.arabnews.com/node/1096246/world>

- **Kabul ready to cooperate with Tehran in various spheres**

President Ashraf Ghani said on Sunday Afghanistan is ready to cooperate with Iran in economic, trade, counter-narcotics and border issues with a clear roadmap. A statement from the Presidential Palace said President Ghani met Iran's Foreign Minister Dr. Mohammad Javad Zarif and the high level delegation accompanying him at the palace on Sunday.

More Details:

<http://www.pajhwok.com/en/2017/05/07/kabul-ready-cooperate-tehran-various-spheres>

- **Turkmen-Afghan security commission discuss TAPI**

The Turkmen-Afghan security commission's meeting was held in the capital of Afghanistan, Kabul on May 4. Delegation of Turkmenistan led by the Minister of Foreign Affairs Rashid Meredov took part in the meeting, the press service of the MFA said.

More Details:

<http://akipress.com/news:592167/>

- **Pakistan seeks US help to break Afghan-India nexus**

Pakistan has asked the United States to help break the India-Afghanistan nexus against Pakistan for the sake of regional peace, The Nation has learnt.

More Details:

<http://nation.com.pk/national/08-May-2017/pakistan-seeks-us-help-to-break-afghan-india-nexus>

- **India destroys Pakistan's bunker in 60 seconds**

A video of Indian Army destroying a Pakistani bunker along the Line of Control (LoC) has gone viral today, but it wasn't in retaliation to the mutilation of soldiers incident or continuous attacks perpetrated by the neighbouring country.

More Details:

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/india-destroys-pakistans-bunker-in-60-seconds/articleshow/58570306.cms?>

- **9 dead as Pakistan-Afghanistan border tension escalates**

At least nine people were killed and dozens injured when Afghan border forces fired at a census team in Pakistan's Balochistan on Friday -- a day after the Afghan President turned down invitations to visit Islamabad.

More Details:

<http://www.theweekendleader.com/Headlines/9774/9-dead-as-pakistan-afghanistan-border-tension-escalates-.html>

## 10.TURKEY AND THE MIDDLE EAST

- **Erdogan due in Kuwait on Tues. for groundbreaking event**

President Recep Tayyip Erdogan will visit Kuwait on Tuesday to participate in a groundbreaking ceremony of a Turkish company constructing a new main terminal in the Kuwait International Airport. According to the Turkish presidency's press center on Sunday, Erdogan and Kuwaiti Emir Sheikh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Jaber al-Sabah will hold a tete-a-tete meeting.

More Details:

<http://www.worldbulletin.net/turkey/189153/erdogan-due-in-kuwait-on-tues-for-groundbreaking-event>

- **Turkish army not to enter Syria's Idlib: Hatay governor**

Governor's office in the southern Turkish province of Hatay has denied Saturday reports claiming that the Turkish army would be deployed to Syria's opposition-held province of Idlib. "Such statements that were claimed by some Arabic publishing [web] sites and social media accounts saying that the Turkish army will enter the Idlib region are not reflecting the truth," the governor's office stated.

More Details:

<http://aa.com.tr/en/middle-east/turkish-army-not-to-enter-syrias-idlib-hatay-governor/812909>

- **Turkish military chief Akar meets top US general Dunford in Washington to discuss Syria, YPG**

The official Turkish delegation led by the Commander of Turkish Armed Forces Gen. Hulusi Akar met the U.S. Chairman of Joint Staff Gen. Joseph Dunford on Friday night, Turkish and American officials told Daily Sabah. Gen. Akar, along with Turkey's National Intelligence Agency (MIT) chief Hakan Fidan and presidential spokesman and senior advisor İbrahim Kalin visiting Washington to lay the groundwork for President Tayyip Erdoğan's visit on May 15-16.

More Details:

<https://www.dailysabah.com/diplomacy/2017/05/07/turkish-military-chief-akar-meets-top-us-general-dunford-in-washington-to-discuss-syria-ypg>

*\*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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