



# MIDDLE EAST DAILY BULLETIN

## GÜNLÜK ORTADOĐU BÜLTENİ

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## 1. IRAQ

- **Jubouri Meets Romanian ambassador**

Parliament Speaker Salim al-Jubouri stressed the importance of cooperation and coordination between Iraq and Romania to eradicate the sources of terrorism. A statement by the Information Office of the President of the House of Representatives, said "al-Jubouri received, today in his office, the Romanian ambassador to Iraq, Jacob Prada and discussed with him ways to strengthen relations between the two countries, and developments in the regional situation and security challenges facing the region and the fight against Daesh."

More Details:

[http://www.ninanews.com/News\\_Details.aspx?Sx9mzMkTaEG44NSfgQJuEg%253d%253d](http://www.ninanews.com/News_Details.aspx?Sx9mzMkTaEG44NSfgQJuEg%253d%253d)

- **Islamic State distribute expired children medicines, faking stability**

Islamic State militants in western Mosul have begun to give out children medicines to paint a picture of a stable life, but local sources say the drugs turned out to be expired. A local source told Alsumaria news said IS-run clinics have begun to distribute children medicines as part of a media campaign run by the extremist group to give an impression of stability while the group braces for a major offensive by government forces.

More Details:

<http://www.iraqinews.com/iraq-war/islamic-state-distribute-expired-children-medicines-faking-stability/>

- **Security Measures Tightened in Baghdad after US Warning**

Iraqi security forces have boosted security measures in the capital city following Monday's warning by the US embassy over possible terrorist attacks in the city. Places frequented by foreign diplomatic missions and bodies in the Iraqi capital are protected by "high-level security measures", Anadolu Agency quoted army affiliate Baghdad Operations Command (BOC) on Tuesday.

More Details:

<http://www.basnews.com/index.php/en/news/iraq/328911>

- **UN says 30,000 have returned to Iraq's Mosul**

Some 30,000 people have returned to Mosul since Iraqi forces launched a massive operation in October to retake the country's second largest city from the Islamic State group, the U.N. said Tuesday. The number of returnees has increased since Iraqi forces drove the militants from the

eastern half of the city last month, according to U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Aid. IS still holds western Mosul, home to an estimated 750,000 people. At times, the crowds have overwhelmed checkpoints outside the city, where security forces are screening those who want to return.

More Details:

[http://www.shafaaq.com/en/En\\_NewsReader/2bf4f6a2-0e0b-461f-b9f6-d0b5078c9925/-UN-says-30-000-have-returned-to-Iraq%E2%80%99s-Mosul-](http://www.shafaaq.com/en/En_NewsReader/2bf4f6a2-0e0b-461f-b9f6-d0b5078c9925/-UN-says-30-000-have-returned-to-Iraq%E2%80%99s-Mosul-)

- **BOC: diplomatic missions, westerners are safe in Baghdad**

Places frequented by foreign diplomatic missions and bodies in the Iraqi capital are protected by "high-level security measures", Baghdad Operations Command (BOC) said on Tuesday. The announcement comes after Monday's U.S. embassy warning that it had received "credible threats of possible attacks" on hotels in Baghdad frequented by westerners.

More Details:

[http://www.pukmedia.com/EN/EN\\_Direje.aspx?Jimare=39687](http://www.pukmedia.com/EN/EN_Direje.aspx?Jimare=39687)

- **Will the Iraq-U.S. relationship survive the Trump era?**

Iraq is at an important crossroads in the fight against the Islamic State. With aggressive posturing between the incoming Trump Administration and Iran, pressure will increase on Iraqi Prime Minister al-Abadi. Is the future of the Iraq-U.S. relationship now at risk? Iraq's Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi has been under a state of political siege for the last few years. The country has been held together begrudgingly by a shared determination to confront and defeat extremism but political divisions among Iraq's ruling Shia Muslims are now especially heightened following the Trump Administrations' executive order to ban Iraqi citizens (among a list of six other countries) from entering the U.S. for 90 days.

More Details:

<http://globalriskinsights.com/2017/02/will-iraq-u-s-relationship-survive-trump-era/>

- **Church in Iraq calls for assistance to rebuild towns liberated from ISIS**

Stating that the vast majority of displaced Iraqi Christians wish to return home, the Chaldean Catholic Patriarchate has called for financial assistance from the US, the EU, and the Iraqi government to rebuild Christian villages recently liberated from the rule of the Islamic State.

More Details:

<http://www.catholicculture.org/news/headlines/index.cfm?storyid=30685>

- **Iraq's Abadi expects Kurdish forces to return to pre-Mosul lines**

Kurdish Peshmerga forces should be expected to return to the positions they held prior to the Oct. 17 Mosul operations to liberate the city from Islamic State (IS), Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi said in an interview. "There's an agreement [that existed] before we started the offensive to liberate Mosul between the KRG, the Kurdish Regional Government, and the Iraqi federal government that we work together, they help liberate the Iraqi security forces in liberating Mosul," Abadi told France 24 in an interview.

More Details:

<http://ekurd.net/abadi-kurdish-return-mosul-2017-02-07>

- **ISIL Steals 45 Patients' Kidneys in Iraq's Mosul**

The kidneys of 45 patients were stolen by the ISIL militants in the hospitals located on the right side of Mosul, Iraqi media said. The reports cited an informed but unidentified source saying that the extremists have not only stolen the kidneys of civilian patients but even those of their own members, BAS News reported.

More Details:

<http://en.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13951119000969>

- **Japan approves \$100 million loan for Iraq**

Japan has approved a loan of about \$100 million to support humanitarian, counter-terrorism and infrastructure projects in Iraq, a Japanese embassy statement said on Tuesday. Japan last month agreed to lend Iraq up to 27.2 billion yen (\$240 million) to rebuild damaged electricity infrastructure in areas recaptured from Islamic State.

More Details:

<http://ekurd.net/japan-100-million-loan-iraq-2017-02-07>

- **Iraq needs 'Afghanistan-style' demining operation after Islamic State: UN**

Removing mines, explosives and booby traps left by Islamic State forces in Iraq's Mosul could cost \$50 million, United Nations officials said on Tuesday. Costs for Iraq as a whole were previously estimated at \$50 million this year, but this could double because of Mosul, the UN Mine Action Service (UNMAS) said.

More Details:

<https://www.alaraby.co.uk/english/news/2017/2/7/iraq-needs-afghanistan-style-demining-operation-after-islamic-state-un>

- **Iraq monitoring movements of Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi: Abadi**

ISIS terrorist group leader, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, is isolated and his movements are being monitored, Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi told FRANCE 24 in an exclusive interview. But he refused to provide details of the terror chief's whereabouts. Speaking to FRANCE 24 in the Iraqi capital of Baghdad, Abadi said a US-led anti-ISIS group military operation had "killed and eliminated" most of ISIS leader's aides.

More Details:

<http://en.abna24.com/news/middle-east/iraq-monitoring-movements-of-abu-bakr-al-baghdadi-abadi.html>

- **Iraq's al-Sadr calls for Wednesday demos in Baghdad**

Firebrand Iraqi Shia cleric and politician Muqtada al-Sadr has called on followers to stage mass demonstrations in Baghdad on Wednesday to demand reform of Iraq's official electoral commission. "We demand reform of the electoral commission, both in terms of its membership and its bylaws," read a statement issued by a committee tasked with organizing Sadrist rallies.

More Details:

<http://aa.com.tr/en/middle-east/iraq-s-al-sadr-calls-for-wednesday-demos-in-baghdad/743166>

- **Oil exports from southern Iraq down in January after OPEC deal -sources**

Feb 7 Crude oil exports from southern Iraq in January fell to 3.275 million barrels per day (bpd) from 3.51 million bpd in December, as the country complied with an agreement with other producers to reduce output, two oil executives said on Tuesday. December's exports from the southern region, where Iraq produces most of its oil, set a record high.

More Details:

<http://www.reuters.com/article/iraq-energy-oil-exports-idUSL5N1FS522?rpc=401&>

- **UN: Millions of dollars needed to de-mine Iraq in wake of Daesh**

Removing mines, explosives and booby traps left by Daesh forces in Iraq's Mosul could cost \$50 million, United Nations officials said on Tuesday. Costs for Iraq as a whole were previously estimated at \$50 million this year, but this could double because of Mosul, the UN Mine Action Service (UNMAS) said. "Looking at the contamination in Mosul we will need \$50 million and \$50 million for

the rest of the country," Paul Heslop, chief of UNMAS programme planning and management section, told Reuters.

More Details:

<http://www.albawaba.com/news/un-millions-dollars-needed-de-mine-iraq-wake-daesh-934670>

- **Iraq forces thwart Daesh attack in 'liberated' E. Mosul**

Two soldiers and ten militants were killed on Tuesday when security forces foiled a Daesh attack in eastern Mosul, according to a local security officer. Earlier Tuesday, a group of Daesh militants forced their way into eastern Mosul's Sumer district, where they seized control of several streets in the area, Army Major Nabhan al-Mamouri told Anadolu Agency.

More Details:

<http://aa.com.tr/en/middle-east/iraq-forces-thwart-daesh-attack-in-liberated-e-mosul/743384>

- **Daesh file recovered in Iraq shows some foreign fighters are refusing to fight**

The documents in the Daesh file hinted at signs of rebellion within the ranks of its foreign fighters. A Belgian militant had a medical note saying he had back pain and would not join the battle. A fighter from France claimed he wanted to leave Iraq to carry out a suicide attack at home. Several requested transfers to Syria. Others just simply refused to fight.

More Details:

<https://www.thestar.com/news/world/2017/02/07/daesh-file-recovered-in-iraq-shows-some-foreign-fighters-are-refusing-to-fight.html>

- **Iraq: In Mosul Battle, ISIS Used Hospital Base**

Islamic State (also known as ISIS) fighters who had occupied a Mosul hospital for two years put staff and patients at risk of attack during the December 2016 battle by the Iraq Security Forces to retake Mosul, Human Rights Watch said today. After the battle around the al-Salam hospital in Wahda neighborhood, ISIS dragged seven Iraqi soldiers' corpses through the streets. One resident told Human Rights Watch that several days later he saw the bodies of three soldiers hanging from a bridge. The area is no longer under ISIS control.

More Details:

<https://www.hrw.org/news/2017/02/08/iraq-mosul-battle-isis-used-hospital-base>

## 2. SYRIA

- **Lavrov Asked to Return Syria to the Arab Union!**

Russian minister of foreign affairs Sergey Lavrov asked to return Syria to its membership in the Arab Union arguing this would give the 'AU' a more active role in the region.

More Details:

<http://www.syrianews.cc/lavrov-asked-return-syria-arab-union/>

- **North Syria Experiences Heightening Tensions as 'Nusra Front' Perseus Expansion**

Beirut- Swathes of northern Syria territory controlled by rebel factions, encompassing rural areas of both Idlib and Aleppo, have been witnessing escalatory tensions.

More Details:

<http://english.aawsat.com/2017/02/article55367039/north-syria-ex%E2%80%8Bp%E2%80%8Beriences-%E2%80%8B%E2%80%8B-heightening-tensions-nusra-front-perseus-expansion>

- **Amnesty International: Syrian Government Hung 13,000 Dissidents in Military Prison**

A new report from Amnesty International charges the Syrian government with systematically executing political dissidents at the Saydnaya military prison.

More Details:

<http://www.breitbart.com/national-security/2017/02/07/syrian-government-allegedly-hung-13000-dissidents-horrifying-prison/>

- **Russia carries out five humanitarian operations in Syrian Aleppo**

Russia conducted five humanitarian operations in the Syrian city of Aleppo in the last 24 hours, delivering aid to 2,500 people, the Russian Defense Ministry said Wednesday, APA reports quoting Sputnik.

More Details:

<http://en.apa.az/world-news/asia-news/russia-carries-out-five-humanitarian-operations-in-syrian-aleppo.html>

- **Assad Says Possible Russia-US Cooperation Positive for Syria**

Syrian President Bashar al-Assad said cooperation between Russia and the United States would be positive, not only for Syria, but the entire world as well, state news agency SANA reported on Tuesday, according to China's Xinhua news agency.

More Details:

<http://www.bernama.com/bernama/v8/wn/newsworld.php?id=1327370>

- **Syrian warplanes carry out airstrikes on rebel areas**

At least 20 airstrikes targeted rebel-held areas in the eastern countryside of the capital Damascus on Tuesday, leaving unknown losses, a monitor group reported.

More Details:

[http://www.china.org.cn/world/2017-02/08/content\\_40243520.htm](http://www.china.org.cn/world/2017-02/08/content_40243520.htm)

- **Assad says 'defending' Syria more important than UN tribunal**

Syrian President Bashar al-Assad said that "defending" his country in a time of war was more important than any international tribunal that may be brought against his government.

More Details:

<https://www.alaraby.co.uk/english/news/2017/2/7/assad-says-defending-syria-more-important-than-un-tribunal>

- **Pakistani charity handing out aid on Syrian border**

A Pakistani charity has arrived at the Turkey-Syria border to feed Syrian refugees, the organization said Tuesday. The Saylani Welfare Trust distributed food to 16,500 people on the border on Tuesday and is setting up a bakery.

More Details:

<http://aa.com.tr/en/asia-pacific/pakistani-charity-handing-out-aid-on-syrian-border/743480>

- **Cabinet approves the “National Program of post-war Syria” draft project**

The Cabinet on Tuesday approved a draft project called the “National Program of post-war Syria. In its weekly session, headed by Premier Emad Khamis, the Cabinet discussions focused on the daily needs of citizens, particularly oil products and other social and economic issues.

More Details:

<http://sana.sy/en/?p=99723>

- **Jordan's participation in Astana meetings will consolidate Syria ceasefire — expert**

Jordan's decision to join the Syria ceasefire monitoring group set up in Kazakhstan's Astana will contribute to ending the crisis, an Arab expert Nidal Sabi told TASS on Tuesday.

More Details:

<http://tass.com/world/929499>

### 3. IRAN

- **Iranian Leader Sends Sarcastic Remarks to Donald Trump**

Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei in sarcastic remarks to the US president thanked Donald Trump for showing the true face of his country to the world, and meantime told him that Iranians are too powerful to be intimidated by his threats.

More Details:

<http://en.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13951119001047>

- **Iran calls on EU to ease banking transactions**

Iran's deputy FM Takht-Ravanchi during a visit to Berlin called on the European Union for more active role in successful implementation of the nuclear deal, particularly in regard to banking transactions.

More Details:

<http://en.mehrnews.com/news/123376/iran-calls-on-EU-to-ease-banking-transactions>

- **Iran, Oman to finalize gas pipeline project by Feb.-end**

Iran and Oman signed on Tuesday an agreement, based on which the framework for building a gas pipeline intended to carry Iranian gas to the Sultanate will be finalized by the end of February.

More Details:

<http://www.tehrantimes.com/news/410879/Iran-Oman-to-finalize-gas-pipeline-project-by-Feb-end>

- **Rouhani: All govt. branches support investment**

President Hassan Rouhani said on Tuesday that Iran's establishment and all the three branches of government support investment and economic activities.

More Details:

<http://www.irna.ir/en/News/82420677/>

- **Iran, Venezuela discuss stabilizing oil prices**

Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif and Venezuelan officials discussed ways to stabilize oil prices in Tehran on Tuesday.

More Details:

<http://www.iran-daily.com/News/177206.html>

- **Iran's Missile Test Not a Breach of UNSC Resolution**

A careful look at the UNSC Resolution 2231 indicates that Iran's recent ballistic missile test has definitely not breached any of the resolution's terms and conditions unlike what Trump administration is trying to convey.

More Details:

<http://ifpnews.com/news/politics/security/2017/02/irans-missile-test-not-a-breach-of-uns-resolution/>

- **Israel Main Threat to Region: Iran's Defense Minister**

Iranian Defense Minister Brigadier General Hossein Dehqan denounced the Israeli regime as the biggest threat to the Middle East region's security.

More Details:

<https://www.tasnimnews.com/en/news/2017/02/08/1321929/israel-main-threat-to-region-iran-s-defense-minister>

- **Iran: Ayatollah Khamenei dismisses US warning on missile tests, says Trump 'real face' of corruption**

In his first speech after the US president's inauguration, the Iranian supreme leader also criticised Washington's immigrant ban.

More Details:

<https://scroll.in/latest/828812/iran-ayatollah-khamenei-dismisses-us-warning-on-missile-tests-says-trump-real-face-of-corruption>

- **Iran calls on EU to ease banking transactions**

Iran's deputy FM Takht-Ravanchi during a visit to Berlin called on the European Union for more active role in successful implementation of the nuclear deal, particularly in regard to banking transactions.

More Details:

<http://en.mehrnews.com/news/123376/iran-calls-on-EU-to-ease-banking-transactions>

- **Japan 'ready to invest' \$6.9bn in Iran's projects**

Japan is ready to allocate \$6.9 billion to fund five projects in Iran in a bid to continue expand bilateral relations between the two countries as well as humanitarian issues, a report said.

More Details:

[http://www.tradearabia.com/news/CONS\\_320405.html](http://www.tradearabia.com/news/CONS_320405.html)

## 4. ISRAEL – PALESTINE

- **Israeli Cabinet ministers warn of possible escalation in Gaza**

Two Israeli Cabinet ministers warned of a possible escalation along Israel's border with the Gaza Strip. Education Minister Naftali Bennett said Tuesday that a conflict in Gaza is a "matter of when, not if," The Times of Israel reported.

More Details

<http://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx/224622>

- **Security Forces Arrest Nine Wanted Suspects in the West Bank**

Nine men suspected of involvement in local terror activities and in participation in violent demonstrations against security forces and civilians were arrested overnight in the West Bank in a joint operation carried out by IDF, Shin Bet, Border Police and Israel Police forces.

More Details

<http://www.jpost.com/Breaking-News/Security-forces-arrest-nine-wanted-suspects-in-the-West-Bank-480912>

- **UK Invites Netanyahu to Balfour Centennial Celebrations: Palestinian Presidency Protests**

Nabil Abu Rodeina said Britain is responsible for the disaster that befell the Palestinian people a hundred years ago. “Instead of correcting the historic mistake and recognizing the Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital, it is preparing to celebrate an incident considered by the Arab world and the international community as a tragic reason that the Palestinian people and the Arab region is paying for”, he added.

More Details

<http://imemc.org/article/uk-invites-netanyahu-to-balfour-centennial-celebrations-palestinian-presidency-protests/>

- **Military Policeman Suspected of Taking Bribes from Palestinians**

An officer in the Military Police was arrested Tuesday on suspicion of accepting bribes from Palestinians at the Taiba checkpoint in the West Bank in exchange for allowing them to enter Israel without the required permits, the IDF confirmed on Tuesday.

More Details

<http://www.jpost.com/Israel-News/Military-policeman-suspected-of-taking-bribes-from-Palestinians-480909>

- **Two US embassies in Jerusalem are better than one**

After two weeks in office, US President Donald Trump has managed to issue more controversial executive orders and statements than some presidents manage in a full term. Surprisingly by his standards, or maybe not, he almost went quiet on his campaign pledges to move the US Embassy in Israel to Jerusalem, and to support Jewish settlements in the occupied Palestinian territories.

More Details

<http://www.arabnews.com/node/1050956>

- **UN, UK, Turkey slam Israel’s settlement legalization law**

Senior Turkish and British government and UN officials condemned a new Israeli bill which legalises settlements built on privately owned Palestinian land. The “Legalisation Law” passed last night allows for the retroactive legalisation of a number of Israeli outposts built in the occupied West Bank on confiscated Palestinian lands.

More Details

<https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20170207-un-uk-turkey-slam-israels-settlement-legalisation-law/>

- **Hamas Rocket Fire Meant to Send Turkey Message from Gaza, Arab Security Official Says**

“It is yet unclear whether Hamas actually carried it out, but the information is that they knew about it before it happened,” he said. Monday’s rocket fire was “different from the previous trickling of rockets not just because it targeted the Ashkelon area, but also because of the Israeli reaction. Both sides understood it’s different this time.” Israel responded by shelling and bombing Hamas terror positions in Gaza.

More Details

<http://www.breitbart.com/jerusalem/2017/02/07/hamas-rocket-fire-meant-to-send-turkey-message-from-gaza-arab-security-official-says/>

- **Israel Passes a Law It Knows Is Unconstitutional**

A law passed Monday by Israel’s Knesset potentially puts the country in violation of international law by retroactively legalizing 4,000 homes built by Jewish settlers on private Palestinian land. But remarkably, the possibility of war-crimes charges isn’t the most worrisome thing about the law. What’s more upsetting is that the Knesset passed a law that the country’s own attorney general had already determined was unconstitutional and in violation of 40 years of Israeli judicial rulings. That the law passed -- with the support of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s Likud government -- raises serious concerns about Israel’s direction as a rule of law society.

More Details

<https://www.bloomberg.com/view/articles/2017-02-07/israel-passes-a-law-it-knows-is-unconstitutional>

- **Israeli settlement bill draws international condemnation**

UN Secretary General Guterres said Tuesday he "deeply regrets" the Israeli parliament's adoption of the bill, warning that it contravened international law and would "have far reaching legal consequences for Israel. "He called on all parties to avoid actions that would derail the two-state solution long-sought internationally. The UN Security Council debates the issue on February 15.

More Details

<http://www.dw.com/en/israeli-settlement-bill-draws-international-condemnation/a-37450055>

- **18 Palestinians injured in southern Israel pile-up**

Eighteen Palestinian workers were injured in a car accident in southern Israel Tuesday that involved at least four vehicles, including the van transporting workers.

More Details

<http://www.timesofisrael.com/18-palestinians-injured-in-southern-israel-pile-up/>

## 5. JORDAN and LEBANON

- **Jordan Frees 8 Prominent Government Critics from Detention**

Relatives and a defense lawyer say eight prominent government critics are free on bail after a month in detention. The men were jailed on charges of incitement, after they protested on social media against tax hikes and the government's purported failure to punish corruption.

More Details

[http://hosted.ap.org/dynamic/stories/M/ML\\_JORDAN\\_JAILING\\_THE\\_ELITE?SITE=AP&SECTION=HOME&TEMPLATE=DEFAULT&CTIME=2017-02-07-14-41-47](http://hosted.ap.org/dynamic/stories/M/ML_JORDAN_JAILING_THE_ELITE?SITE=AP&SECTION=HOME&TEMPLATE=DEFAULT&CTIME=2017-02-07-14-41-47)

- **Russian, Jordanian FMs discuss efforts to resolve Syrian crisis**

The international efforts to reach a political settlement to the Syrian crisis was the focus of a phone conversation between Russian and Jordanian foreign ministers, the Russian Foreign Ministry stated Tuesday.

More Details

<http://www.kuna.net.kw/ArticleDetails.aspx?id=2590874&Language=en>

- **Shoukry in Jordan to meet King Abdullah II for bilateral talks**

Egypt's Foreign Affairs Minister, Sameh Shoukry, headed to Amman, the capital of Jordan, on Tuesday to meet with Abdullah II, King of Jordan, for bilateral talks and to present him with a message from President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi, according to the ministry's spokesperson, Ahmed Abou Zaid.

More Details

<http://www.dailynewsegypt.com/2017/02/07/614714/>

- **Israeli forces demolish Palestinian structures in the Jordan Valley**

Israeli forces demolished Palestinian-owned structures in the Jordan Valley region of the occupied West Bank on Tuesday morning in two separate incidents, according to locals and a United Nations agency.

More Details

<http://www.maannews.com/Content.aspx?ID=775338>

- **Saudi Minister Says Kingdom Keen on 'Distinctive' Ties with Lebanon**

Saudi Minister for Gulf Affairs Thamer al-Sabhan stressed that Saudi Arabia is keen on Lebanon's unity and seeks "distinctive" political relations between the two countries, al-Joumhouria daily reported on Wednesday.

More Details

<http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/225142-saudi-minister-says-kingdom-keen-on-distinctive-ties-with-lebanon>

- **Khalil: Budget will be approved without New Taxes**

In light of a cabinet meeting scheduled for Wednesday to discuss the state's fiscal budget, Finance Minister Ali Hassan Khalil said there are genuine intentions to approve the budget this year after Lebanon failed to approve one since 2005.

More Details

<http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/225134-khalil-budget-will-be-approved-without-new-taxes>

- **World Bank gives Lebanon \$200 million to repair roads**

The World Bank said on Tuesday it has earmarked \$200 million for repairing Lebanon's unsafe roads. The international lender said in a statement that the funds will be used to repair around 500 kilometres (312 miles) of roads in the first phase of a broader government plan "to revamp the country's crumbling road sector.

More Details

<https://www.alaraby.co.uk/english/society/2017/2/7/world-bank-gives-lebanon-200-million-to-repair-roads>

- **Italian Deputy FM meets Lebanese ministers**

"Italian Deputy Foreign Minister, Vincenzo Amendola, started on Monday series of official meetings with Lebanese officials, the Italian embassy said in a statement on Tuesday. Amendola met with Social Affairs Minister, Pierre Abou Assi. He reiterated his support for the international cooperation in the Italian Foreign Ministry to face refugees' crisis.

More Details

<http://nna-leb.gov.lb/en/show-news/75101/Italian-Deputy-FM-meets-Lebanese-ministers>

- **Lebanese government uses military trials to try to crush civilian dissent, rights watchdog warns**

Lebanon's military, which recently received millions in aid from Canada, has been increasingly using secretive military trials to crack down on civilian dissent, Human Rights Watch warns. Last Monday, law student Loyal Seblani, 20, sat in the front row of Beirut's packed military courthouse, nervously tapping her foot on the tile floor as she waited to go before the judge with 14 other young defendants.

More Details

<http://www.cbc.ca/news/world/lebanon-military-court-1.3969478?cmp=rss>

## 6. ARABIAN PENINSULA AND THE GULF OF BASRA

- **Saudi Aggression War against Yemen**

The US-Saudi aggression fighter jets launched a series of raids, targeting a number of areas in Sa'ada province overnight, a security official told Saba on Wednesday.

More Details:

<http://www.sabanews.net/en/news455543.htm>

- **Processing US visa applications in Saudi Arabia resumes as travel ban lifted**

The US diplomatic missions in Saudi Arabia announced that they have resumed processing existing visa applications and schedule appointments for new ones after a US federal court order effectively suspending the travel ban for citizens of Muslim-majority countries imposed by President Trump.

More Details:

<http://www.arabnews.com/node/1050981/saudi-arabia>

- **Saudi Aggression War against Yemen**

Prime Minister Dr. Abdul Aziz Saleh Bin Habtoor discussed on Tuesday with the UNDP Country Director in Yemen Mr. Auke Lootsma the cooperation relations in humanitarian and developmental fields in line with priorities of the current situation.

More Details:

<http://www.sabanews.net/en/news455521.htm>

- **Yemen, FAO sign cooperation agreements**

The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) on Tuesday signed cooperation agreements with Water Users' Associations in the Sana'a Basin.

More Details:

<http://www.sabanews.net/en/news455514.htm>

- **QITCOM conference to promote sustainable economic growth**

The Conference at QITCOM 2017, part of Qatar's biggest digital event, will focus on the transformational power of technology to improve quality of life and promote sustainable economic growth.

More Details:

<http://thepeninsulagatar.com/article/07/02/2017/QITCOM-conference-to-promote-sustainable-economic-growth>

- **Global Cities of the Future: Sharjah, Dubai make top ten list for connectivity**

Sharjah has been named as one of the top 10 cities in the world for connectivity, coming in ahead of several cities including Frankfurt, Manchester, Miami, and Dubai.

More Details:

<http://www.albawaba.com/business/global-cities-future-sharjah-dubai-make-top-ten-list-connectivity-935016>

- **Government's focus on more jobs: PM**

His Royal Highness Prime Minister Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa opened the Gulf Industry Fair (GIF-2017) at the Bahrain International Exhibition and Convention Centre (BIECC), yesterday.

More Details:

<http://www.newsofbahrain.com/viewNews.php?ppld=30251&TYPE=Posts&pid=21&MNU=2&SUB=1>

- **Deputy King inaugurates BDF facility**

The Deputy King, His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa yesterday inaugurated a new facility at the Bahrain Defence Force (BDF) Officers' Club in Manama.

More Details:

<http://www.newsofbahrain.com/viewNews.php?ppld=30250&TYPE=Posts&pid=21&MNU=2&SUB=1>

- **Oman, Iran renew agreement to build gas export pipeline**

Iran and Oman signed a renewed document of 'general framework of agreement to build gas export pipeline' in the presence of oil ministers of the two countries on Tuesday in Tehran, according to Iranian media reports.

More Details:

<http://www.muscatdaily.com/Archive/Oman/Oman-Iran-renew-agreement-to-build-gas-export-pipeline-4xxv>

## 7. EGYPT

- **Accelerating issuing of laws will help improve business environment, attract investments**

The Egyptian Financial Supervisory Authority (EFSA) has almost completed its preparation of laws and regulation amendments of the past three years, which have been sent to ministers from various ministries.

More Details:

<http://www.dailynewsegypt.com/2017/02/07/614786/>

- **Tensions arise between Al-Azhar and presidency over verbal divorce debate**

Recent calls by President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi to reduce Egypt's escalating divorce rate by ending verbal divorce have been met with resistance from Al-Azhar, feeding into an ongoing disagreement between the state and the country's largest Islamic institution.

More Details:

<http://www.madamasr.com/en/2017/02/07/feature/politics/tensions-arise-between-al-azhar-and-presidency-over-verbal-divorce-debate/>

- **Financial support to the poor: Does it really work?**

With the devaluation of the Egyptian pound, the government has vowed to expand its financial aid program for the poor through two funds established in 2015: the Solidarity Fund and the Dignity Fund. However, officials have equally implemented a number of austerity measures that have undercut basic social security, provoking doubt as to the ability of the promised expansion to alleviate the effects of poverty.

More Details:

<http://www.madamasr.com/en/2017/02/07/feature/economy/financial-support-to-the-poor-does-it-really-work/>

- **Foreign ministry praises White House's criticism of western media's subjectivity in covering terror attacks**

On Tuesday, Egyptian Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry praised the White House's criticism of western media outlets' alleged disregard to cover 78 terrorist assaults around the world, according to a statement issued by the ministry's official spokesperson, Ahmed Abou Zaid.

More Details:

<http://www.dailynewsegypt.com/2017/02/07/foreign-ministry-praises-white-houses-criticism-western-medias-subjectivity-covering-terror-attacks/>

- **Details of Egyptian cabinet reshuffle to be put to parliament Sunday: PM**

The details of an anticipated cabinet reshuffle will be presented to the parliament on Sunday, Prime Minister Sherif Ismail said on Tuesday.

More Details:

<http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/64/257765/-.aspx>

- **Egypt praises Trump's criticism of foreign media terrorism reporting**

Egypt's Foreign Ministry praised the US administration for highlighting the fact that the global media has ignored many of the terrorist attacks that have occurred worldwide.

More Details:

<http://www.egyptindependent.com//news/egypt-praises-trump-s-criticism-foreign-media-terrorism-reporting>

- **Promoting Sudanese sovereignty over Hala'ib Triangle is “unfounded and meaningless”: Egypt’s former foreign minister**

Recent statements of Sudanese president Omar Hassan Ahmad Al-Bashir, stipulating that his country will resort to the UN Security Council if Egypt refused negotiations regarding the Hala'ib Triangle, renewed controversy on the real identity of the triangle.

More Details:

<http://www.dailynewsegypt.com/2017/02/07/614718/>

- **Egypt to list Banque Du Caire's shares on bourse in 'few months': minister**

Banque Du Caire, one of Egypt's largest and oldest public lenders, has filed a request at the Egyptian bourse to see its shares offered through an initial public offering on the bourse in the "few coming months", investment minister Dalia Khorshid told Al-Ahram daily newspaper Saturday.

More Details:

<http://en.amwalalghad.com/business/banks/54817-egypt-to-list-banque-du-caires-shares-on-bourse-in-few-months-minister.html>

- **Pharmacists, Health Minister reach agreement over profit margin crisis**

Egypt's Pharmacists Syndicate yesterday cancelled a planned protest and called off a strike that was to be held on February 12, after President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi and Health Minister Ahmed Emad Eddin agreed to fulfill its demands.

More Details:

<http://www.egyptindependent.com//news/pharmacists-health-minister-reach-agreement-over-profit-margin-crisis>

## 8. NORTH AFRICA

- **Algeria, Tunisia to increase energy supply in border areas**

Algerian and Tunisian officials on Tuesday agreed on working to increase and optimize energy supply on the border areas of the two neighboring North African nations.

More Details:

[http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-02/08/c\\_136039142.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-02/08/c_136039142.htm)

- **Foreign ministry regrets publications aiming at "amplifying biased assessments of Algeria"**

The Foreign Ministry on Tuesday expressed regret after some national papers have published, sometimes in sensational way, "remarks and statements attributed to individuals, both known and anonymous" and "allegedly academic" studies, with the aim of "amplifying the speculative and biased assessments of the situation in Algeria and its prospects."

More Details:

<http://en.aps.dz/algeria/16581-foreign-ministry-regrets-publications-aiming-at-amplifying-biased-assessments-of-algeria>

- **27 injured as police clash with protesters in Morocco**

Protesters clashed with riot police in northern Morocco on Sunday evening as people marked the anniversary of the death of an anti-colonial hero, leaving 27 injured, according to authorities. Hundreds took to the streets in the city of Al-Hoceima and other towns of the Rif region, a Berber majority area which has been the scene of dissent over the last few decades.

More Details:

<https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20170207-27-injured-as-police-clash-with-protesters-in-morocco/>

- **Tunisia terrorist attack: 'Thomson said it was 100% SAFE' claims holidaymaker**

The Tunisia terrorist attack inquest into the deaths of 30 Britons who were shot on the beach in June 2015 has brought forth accusations that Thomson staff encouraged holidaymakers to go there – without mentioning the risks.

More Details:

<http://www.express.co.uk/travel/articles/764227/tunisia-inquest-terrorist-attack-thomson>

- **List of members of Peers Council for Equal Gender Opportunities**

The Government Decree of January 25, 2017 on the appointment of members of the Council of Peers for Equal Gender Opportunities was published in the Official Gazette of the Republic of Tunisia (JORT). The Council is responsible for integrating the gender approach into planning, programming, evaluation and budgeting, with the aim of eradicating all forms of discrimination between men and women.

More Details:

<http://www.tap.info.tn/en/Portal-Society/8691426-list-of-members-of>

- **Establishment of Supreme Judicial Council and Constitutional Court focus of Caid Essebsi/Ennaceur meeting**

President Beji Caid Essebsi received, on Tuesday at Carthage Palace, Speaker of the House of Peoples' Representatives (HPR) Mohamed Ennaceur.

More Details:

<http://www.tap.info.tn/en/Portal-Politics/8691228-establishment-of>

- **HoR member lashes out at GNA-Italy MoU, says Libyans won't accept migrants camps in the countr**

The EU's plan to build a camp for asylum seekers in Libya is a cynical attempt to take advantage of political instability in the country, Libyan member of the House of Representatives, Said Amgib, told Sputnik.

More Details:

<http://www.libyanexpress.com/hor-member-lashes-out-at-gna-italy-mou-says-libyans-wont-accept-migrants-camps-in-the-country/>

- **Senior UN official urges Libya to protect migrants from conflict-related sexual violence**

The highest United Nations official tasked with advocating against the use of sexual violence as a weapon of war urged today Libyan authorities to protect migrants from rape and other human rights violations.

More Details:

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=56122#.WJrXndSLSmU>

- **EU Renews Support for GNA, Re-consider Sanctions on Some Libyan Figures**

Foreign Ministers of EU member states have renewed their support for the Presidency Council of the Government of National Accord, which they said was a more credible interlocutor. They called on all parties to act in the spirit of a positive dialogue, and to join the political process. According to the Italian Akipress news agency, the Ministers urged all Libyan parties to avoid any action that might undermine political transition in Libya.

More Details: <http://www.lana->

[news.ly/eng/news/view/110467/EU\\_Renews\\_Support\\_for\\_GNA\\_Re\\_consider\\_Sanctions\\_on\\_Some\\_Libyan\\_Figures](http://www.lana-news.ly/eng/news/view/110467/EU_Renews_Support_for_GNA_Re_consider_Sanctions_on_Some_Libyan_Figures)

- **Libya's 'turf wars' leaves seven dead in Tripoli**

Heavy fighting broke out in a residential district west of Tripoli on Sunday, as two organised crime gangs clashed in a proxy 'turf-war'. The Janzour Knight brigade, who support the west Libyan Government of National Accord (GNA) used mortars and light weaponry in Janzour against the opposing Tribes Army from Wirshefana, which reportedly backs east Libya's General Haftar.

More Details:

<http://www.albawaba.com/news/libya%E2%80%99s-%E2%80%98turf-wars%E2%80%99-leaves-seven-dead-tripoli-934326>

## 9. AFGHANISTAN – PAKISTAN

- **Support to Afghan govt, security forces a strategic priority for US: Flynn**

The National Security Adviser of the United States Michael T. Flynn has reaffirmed Washington's support to Afghanistan, emphasizing that support to the Afghan government and security forces remains a strategic priority for the US government.

More Details:

<http://www.khaama.com/support-to-afghan-govt-security-forces-a-strategic-priority-for-us-flynn-02835>

- **EU delegation in Afghanistan condemns Kabul terrorist attack**

The European Union (EU) delegation to Afghanistan on Wednesday condemned a terrorist attack against the Afghan Supreme Court employees which killed 20 people and injured over 40 others, said an official statement.

More Details:

[http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-02/08/c\\_136041092.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-02/08/c_136041092.htm)

- **Moscow Seeking Cooperation with Afghanistan's Security**

Moscow wants to cooperate with Kabul in a range of areas, especially in security and economy, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said on Tuesday opening talks with his Afghan counterpart Salahuddin Rabbani.

More Details:

<http://www.bakhtarnews.com.af/eng/politics/item/27434-moscow-seeking-cooperation-with-afghanistan%E2%80%99s-security.html>

- **Four IS militants handed over to Afghan govt**

Pakistan handed over four suspected members of the militant Islamic State (IS) group's Afghanistan chapter to Kabul as 'a gesture of goodwill' on Tuesday.

More Details:

<http://www.dawn.com/news/1313486/four-is-militants-handed-over-to-afghan-govt>

- **Afghanistan Supreme Court attack kills 2**

At least 20 people were reported to have been killed and 41 injured on Tuesday following a terrorist attack [Al Jazeera report] at the Supreme Court in Kabul, Afghanistan. It is believed that the perpetrator wore a suicide vest and targeted people who were exiting the courthouse. The Taliban is suspected, as they have attacked Afghan courthouses in the past. This attack comes after a recent UN report that civilian casualties [JURIST report] in Afghanistan have reached record highs.

More Details:

<http://www.jurist.org/paperchase/2017/02/afghanistan-supreme-court-attack-kills-20.php>

- **Pakistan could overtake Canada's economy by 2050: PWC report**

A report by management consultancy PricewaterhouseCoopers forecasts that Pakistan could surpass the Canadian economy by 2050. "By 2050, emerging economies such as Mexico and Indonesia are likely to be larger than the UK and France, while Pakistan and Egypt could overtake Italy and Canada," PWC said in a report published Tuesday.

More Details:

<http://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2017/02/08/pakistan-could-overtake-canadas-economy-by-2050-pwc-report/>

- **Pakistan hands over Daesh fighters to Afghan govt**

In what is billed as a goodwill gesture, Pakistan has handed over four Islamic State (IS) militants from eastern Nangarhar province to the Afghan government.

More Details:

<http://www.pajhwok.com/en/2017/02/08/pakistan-hands-over-daesh-fighters-afghan-govt>

- **Pakistan Electoral Reform Plans Aim to Boost Women's Participation in Politics**

Reforms to Pakistan's electoral laws making it mandatory for political parties to allot five percent of their tickets to women candidates were approved on Tuesday by the federal cabinet, the country's highest decision-making body.

More Details:

<http://www.voanews.com/a/pakistan-electoral-reform-hopes-to-boost-women-participation-in-politics/3710710.html>

- **Pakistan to Boost LNG Import Capacity**

Qatar Petroleum, Total, Mitsubishi, ExxonMobil, and Höegh LNG have announced plans to advance an LNG import project in Pakistan in collaboration with Global Energy Infrastructure Limited. The consortium will develop a project that includes an FSRU, a jetty and a pipeline to shore. The FSRU is expected to have a minimum regasification capacity of 750 million cubic feet per day by 2018.

More Details:

<http://maritime-executive.com/article/pakistan-to-boost-lng-import-capacity>

## 10. TURKEY AND THE MIDDLE EAST

- **Turkish minister makes first Israel visit since crisis**

Turkish Culture and Tourism Minister Nabi Avci met with Israeli officials during a regional tourism conference in Tel Aviv on Tuesday, marking the first Turkish ministerial visit since diplomatic ties were renewed last year. Avci was among tourism ministers from 10 countries attending the International Mediterranean Tourism Market conference, which his Israeli counterpart Yariv Levin described as the largest hosted by Israel.

More Details:

<http://www.worldbulletin.net/turkey/184374/turkish-minister-makes-first-israel-visit-since-crisis>

- **Turkey, UAE officials discuss trade ties**

Senior Turkish and U.A.E. officials discussed economic and trade relations at a high-level meeting in Ankara on Tuesday. The ninth Turkey-U.A.E. Joint Economic Committee brought Sultan bin Saeed al-Mansouri -- the U.A.E. economy minister -- to the Turkish capital to meet Deputy Prime Minister Mehmet Simsek.

More Details:

<http://aa.com.tr/en/economy/turkey-uae-officials-discuss-trade-ties/743230>

*\*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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