



MIDDLE EAST DAILY BULLETIN

GÜNLÜK ORTADOĐU BÜLTENİ

Domestic Policy in the Middle East Countries

Bölge Ülkelerinde İç Siyaset

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1. IRAQ

- **Abadi: The Main Objective of the Government Is Serving the Citizen**

Prime Minister, Haider al-Abadi stressed that, "The main objective of the government is serving the citizen, indicating that the government continues in the process of transferring powers to the provinces and to emphasize the cooperation of local governments with the central government to improve the reality service to the provinces. Abadi, during chairing the meeting of the Supreme Commission for coordination between the province, according to a statement of the Information Office of the Prime Minister said "the political differences should not affect the work and achievement," adding "it is inconceivable that some people spend four years with conflict and leaves the work".

More Details:

http://www.ninanews.com/News_Details.aspx?XuL3o93T7%252bEXzDakPAT2YQ%253d%253d

- **Trump to call Abadi on Thursday: political source**

Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi will receive a phone call from United States President Donald Trump on Thursday evening as per a request from the latter, source said. Alsumaria News quoted "an informed political source" a saying that the call will tackle political and security developments in Iraq and the Middle East, but did not mention specifics.

More Details:

<http://www.iraqinews.com/baghdad-politics/trump-call-abadi-thursday-political-source/>

- **IS Abducts Near 400 Civilians Fleeing Hawija**

The so-called Islamic State (IS) has reportedly abducted 385 civilians fleeing Hawija district, southwest of Kirkuk, a source has told Al Sumaria News on Thursday. The source who spoke to the Iraqi Al Sumaria News on condition of anonymity said that IS militants have abducted 260 people near the village of Dhibat , while moving towards the area of Maktab Khalid.

More Details:

<http://www.basnews.com/index.php/en/news/iraq/329354>

- **ISIS kills 20 personnel of the Iraqi joint forces in attacks on Tikrit**

Daesh terrorist organization on Thursday launched organized attacks on Iraqi government forces and Iran-run militias of IMIS in northern and eastern Tikrit city, Salahuddine governorate. The attacks left

20 personnel of the Iraqi joint forces killed. Meanwhile, Iraqi government authorities imposed an all-out curfew on Tikrit in anticipation of similar attacks.

More Details:

<http://www.thebaghdadpost.com/en/story/5888/ISIS-kills-20-personnel-of-the-Iraqi-joint-forces-in-attacks-on-Tikrit>

- **Daesh abducts 385 civilians in Iraq**

Daesh late Thursday, abducted 385 civilians, including women and children, in this northern Iraqi city, a senior Iraqi army official told Anadolu Agency, APA reports. "The security sources have confirmed that Daesh stopped 260 civilians in Zeibat village who were trying to run away from Kirkuk's Havice district toward Peshmerga-held regions," Capt. Khamid al-Obeidi said, adding that a separate group of 125 civilians were stopped in the village of Hamel in southern Kirkuk.

More Details:

<http://en.apa.az/world-news/asia-news/daesh-abducts-385-civilians-in-iraq.html>

- **Iraq Hezbollah leader assassinated in Basra**

A senior leader within the Iran-backed Iraqi Hezbollah militant group was assassinated last night in the southern Shia-dominated city of Basra according to local police sources and social media activists. "Bassem Al-Moussawi, secretary-general of [Iraq's] Hezbollah, was killed late yesterday when unidentified assailants opened fire on his car in Basra province's Al-Hayyaniya district," the Basra police force spokesman, Major Jumaa Al-Hamrani, told Turkish state-run Anadolu.

More Details:

<https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20170209-iraq-hezbollah-leader-assassinated-in-basra/>

- **Canadian company investigating branch in Iraq after logo spotted in photos of missile test**

A Canadian construction company says it has severed ties with its representative in Baghdad and is probing what role he may have played in a recent missile test by the Iraqi government. "We're actually investigating the incident," said Ali Aziz of Advanced Development Group Ltd. "We've pulled out the authorization from that person that we have in Iraq. We're sending somebody in to look over things."

More Details:

<http://www.theprovince.com/news/national/canadian+company+investigating+branch+iraq+after+logo/12883101/story.html>

- **Harjit Sajjan Pressed By Tories On 'Danger Pay' Issue Impacting Troops In Iraq**

A defence minister who is a veteran of three combat tours in Afghanistan attempted to fend off accusations Thursday that the government he serves is pinching pennies when it comes to soldiers in harm's way. Harjit Sajjan was pressured by Conservatives in question period over revelations from CTV News that more than 300 soldiers in Kuwait, who are assisting in the fight against the so-called Islamic State, will lose a tax break worth at least \$1,500 a month. The tax break is essentially danger pay for troops stationed in especially unsafe areas.

More Details:

http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/2017/02/09/harjit-sajjan-danger-pay-iraq-isis_n_14664498.html

- **Mass graves found in western Iraq — officials**

Iraqi soldiers have discovered two shallow graves containing the bodies of people executed by the Daesh terror group in the western desert town of Rutba, officials said Thursday. "The Iraqi army found two mass graves in Rutba containing the bodies of members of the security forces and of civilians," a captain in the army's 1st division told AFP.

More Details:

<http://jordantimes.com/news/region/mass-graves-found-western-iraq-%E2%80%94-officials>

- **Towards real reconciliation in Iraq?**

"There are no disputes among the Iraqi people," Iraqi MP Hisham Al-Suhail, head of the Reconciliation Committee of the Iraqi parliament, told Al-Ahram Weekly this week, adding that "reconciliation in Iraq is not just an internal issue, but also depends on agreements among the regional countries." Al-Suhail was giving his point of view on the Syrian situation, where the conflict in the country has come to a halt as a result of a deal among regional countries. He told the Weekly that he had discussed his views with the American ambassador and other foreign diplomats in Baghdad.

More Details:

<http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/News/19603.aspx>

- **Counterterrorism: USA, Iraq Determined to Deal ISIS Lasting Defeat**

The United States and Iraq reaffirmed their attachment to a strong partnership that will enable the Iraqis to deal ISIS a lasting defeat, said the US department of Defense in statement on Wednesday. During a phone call between Secretary of Defense Jim Mattis and Iraqi Defense Minister Arfan al-Hayali, the two parties reiterated their commitment to a continued U.S.-Iraq cooperation and a strong partnership that will enable the Iraqis to deal ISIS a lasting defeat, it said.

More Details:

<https://www.morocoworldnews.com/2017/02/207827/counterterrorism-usa-iraq-determined-deal-isis-lasting-defeat/>

- **US-led airstrike destroy one of ISIS' favourite weapons in western Iraq**

While Iraqi forces have turned their attention to the western half of Mosul, ISIS' last stronghold in the country, strikes against the terrorist group have continued elsewhere. With a January 21 strike near Ar Rutbah, in the western part of Iraq's Anbar province, US-led coalition aircraft knocked out an ISIS vehicle. You can see footage of the strike below.

More Details:

<http://www.businessinsider.com.au/us-airstrike-on-isis-car-bomb-in-iraq-2017-2>

- **ISIS Torches Qayyara Oil Field in Northern Iraq, National Units Put out Growing Fires**

Five oil wells are reportedly still burning out of 25 that ISIS set on fire in Qayyara, south of Mosul, an oil ministry statement said on Thursday. State-run North Oil Company crews are working unrelentingly to control fires torched by the hardline terrorists. ISIS militants seek to slow down the advance of U.S.-backed Iraqi forces toward Mosul, their last major city stronghold in Iraq.

More Details:

<http://english.aawsat.com/2017/02/article55367171/isis-torches-qayyara-oil-field-northern-iraq-national-units-put-growing-fires>

- **This May Be Iraq's Next Terrible Insurgency**

The U.S.-backed Iraqi Security Force's battle for the city of Mosul likely won't be the end of fighting in Iraq, the Institute for the Study of War warns in a stark new assessment. Former President Barack Obama's strategy in Iraq focused on bolstering the Iraqi Security Forces taking territory away from the Islamic State. The strategy did little to address the grievances of Iraq's Sunni population, the problem which gave rise to ISIS in the first place. ISW's assessment declares that "the U.S.-backed Coalition has been focused only on eliminating ISIS, not other insurgent groups or the conditions that grow them."

More Details:

<http://dailycaller.com/2017/02/09/this-may-be-iraqs-next-terrible-insurgency/>

- **U.S. Commander in Iraq Predicts Quick Capture Of IS Strongholds**

The top U.S. commander in Iraq says U.S.-backed forces will recapture Islamic State's two remaining strongholds within six months. U.S. Army Lieutenant General Stephen Townsend told the Associated Press on February 8 that the military campaigns to liberate the Syrian city of Raqqa and the Iraqi city of Mosul will "conclude" within the next six months.

More Details:

<http://www.rferl.org/a/u-s-commander-townsend-islamic-state-strongholds-captured/28299914.html>

- **Iraq's top Shiite cleric slams Int'l community's silence towards terrorism**

Grand Ayatollah Bashir al-Najafi, an Iraqi Shia source of emulation, received Mr Ján Figel, Special Envoy for the promotion of freedom of religion or belief outside the European Union on Wednesday. During the meeting which was held in the cleric's house on Wednesday February 8, Grand Ayatollah Bashir al-Najafi asserted, "human dignity is highly respected in genuine Islamic teachings and the world must come to realize the fact that terrorism has nothing to do with genuine Islam at all; I've repeatedly emphasized that we as Muslims reach out for all those who seek peace and friendship in the world, yet we are resilient in our fight against those who seek hostility towards humanity as well as mankind."

More Details:

<http://en.abna24.com/news/grand-ayatollahs/iraqs-top-shiite-cleric-slams-int%E2%80%99s-community%E2%80%99s-silence-towards-terrorism.html>

2. SYRIA

- **Some of the refugees from Syria's civil war are 'definitely' terrorists, claims President Assad**

Syrian President Bashar al-Assad has claimed some of the refugees who have fled the war-torn country are 'definitely terrorists'. It is thought around 4.9million Syrians have left since the outbreak of the civil war in 2011.

More Details:

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-4209710/Some-refugees-Syria-definitely-terrorists.html>

- **Syrian Parliament Assesses Energy Crisis and Foresees Solutions**

The Minister of Petroleum and Mineral Resources, Ali Ghanem accounted for the present energy crisis and some possible solutions. The current Syrian oil output does not daily exceed three thousand oil barrels, a number less than the one reached before the war that provided gas self-sustaining and other by-products.

More Details:

<http://www.plenglish.com/index.php?o=rn&id=9119&SEO=syrian-parliament-assesses-energy-crisis-and-foresees-solutions>

- **Belarusian Ambassador: USD 8 million is the value of Syrian fruit and vegetable exports to Belarus in past 3 months**

The Syrian fruit and vegetable exports to Belarus have increased in the last three months compared to past years, said Ambassador of Belarus in Damascus Alexander Ponomarev, putting the total value of these exports at USD 8 million. His remarks came during a meeting on Thursday with Minister of Economy and Foreign Trade Adib Mayaleh to discuss means of boosting trade and economic relations between Belarus and Syria.

More Details:

<http://sana.sy/en/?p=99851>

- **Russian Foreign Ministry: Talks over Syria in Astana will be held on February 15-16**

Talks over Syria in Astana will be held on February 15-16, said the Russian Foreign Ministry representative Maria Zakharova, reports RIA Novosti. "We proceed from the fact, that we are at the preparatory stage now. The meeting in Astana can take place on February 15-16, "Zakharov said during the briefing.

More Details:

<https://news.am/eng/news/372448.html>

- **Russia Underlines Growth in Number of Regions Joining Peace Agreement with Syrian Gov't**

Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Oleg Syromolotov underscored that more and more regions, cities, towns and villages are joining peace with the Syrian Army after the ceasefire agreement was sealed on December 30, 2016.

More Details:

<http://en.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13951121001234>

- **Turkish, Russian FMs mull situation in Syria**

Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu had a phone conversation with his Russian counterpart Sergey Lavrov, the Turkish media reported Feb. 9.

More Details:

<http://en.trend.az/world/2719091.html>

- **Syria denies mass hangings**

Syria's justice ministry yesterday rejected an Amnesty International report of mass hangings of as many as 13,000 people in a prison near Damascus, calling the allegations "totally untrue" and part of a smear campaign.

More Details:

<http://www.independent.ie/world-news/middle-east/syria-denies-mass-hangings-35436355.html>

- **Challenges to Russia peace efforts in Syria**

Despite major violations to the ceasefire in Syria, uncertainty about the policies of the new United States administration, and Iran's subversive role, Russia continues seemingly undeterred with its plan to resolve the Syrian crisis. Moscow succeeded in taking the first step of getting the armed Syrian opposition factions and the regime of President Bashar Al Assad to meet in Astana — Kazakhstan — last month.

More Details:

<http://gulfnews.com/opinion/thinkers/challenges-to-russia-peace-efforts-in-syria-1.1975918>

- **IDF fires on Syrian post after shell lands in Golan**

The IDF fired on a Syrian government position in the Golan Heights Wednesday night after a tank shell landed in Israeli territory. The tank shell caused no injuries or damage. It occurred during reported clashes between Syrian government and rebel forces in the villages of Ufaniya and Hamidiya in the demilitarized zone.

More Details:

<http://www.timesofisrael.com/idf-fires-on-syrian-post-after-shell-lands-in-golan/>

- **NDF members hold vehicle and members of Syria Democratic Forces in the countryside of Qameshly**

Cross sources reported to the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights that the pro-regime NDF in the village of Tal Awdah south of al-Qameshly city have detained a vehicle belongs to the Syria Democratic Forces and arrested 4 members were inside it, and the sources confirmed that the NDF members stipulated the release of an NDF prisoners from the detention of the Syria democratic forces, in exchange of releasing the 4 detained SDF members.

More Details:

<http://www.syriahr.com/en/?p=60584>

3. IRAN

- **Tehran: U.S. Sanctions Aim at Inciting Iranians against Regime**

London- Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Iran's Army Ahmed Reza Pourdastan said Thursday that the U.S. economic sanctions against his country aim to incite the Iranian people and encourage them to revolt against the regime. Speaking to army commanders in Tehran, Pourdastan said Iran could face economic burdens in the future because it has not yet received the money from its oil sales.

More Details:

<http://english.aawsat.com/2017/02/article55367181/tehran-u-s-sanctions-aim-inciting-iranians-regime>

- **Iran: No Change in US Hostilities**

The Iranian foreign ministry reacted to White House press secretary Sean Spicer's recent anti-Iran remarks, stressing that no change is seen in Washington's hostile behavior towards Tehran.

More Details:

<http://en.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13951121000927>

- **Iranians stage nationwide rallies to mark anniversary of 1979 Islamic Revolution**

In their millions, Iranians have filled the streets countrywide to relive the day 38 years ago when the nation's hard-fought Islamic Revolution against the former US-backed regime became victorious. On Friday morning, people from all walks of life started out the commemoration rallies in different cities and towns across Iran to celebrate the anniversary of the 1979 Islamic Revolution.

More Details:

<http://www.presstv.ir/Detail/2017/02/10/509893/Iran-Islamic-Revolution-Leader-Rouhani>

- **History proved Iranophobia is an illusion, not true: Rouhani**

President Hassan Rouhani described the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) as the best model for settling international disagreements and said: “Peace in the region and the world depends on unity amongst nations, dialogue and ruling out extremism and violence”.

More Details:

<http://www.tehrantimes.com/news/410940/History-proved-Iranophobia-is-an-illusion-not-true-Rouhani>

- **Rouhani: Iran military development for defense purposes**

President Hassan Rouhani said on Thursday Iran has shown that it has no intention to interfere in other countries’ internal affairs and its military development is solely for defense purposes.

More Details:

<http://www.irna.ir/en/News/82424304/>

- **Tehran describes report on new missile test as “fake”**

Trend: Iranian Defense Minister Brigadier General Hossein Dehqan has said the Americans’ new claim on Iran’s missile test is aimed at “spreading Iranophobia”, describing the reports as “fake”.

More Details:

<http://en.trend.az/iran/politics/2719173.html>

- **Iran’s DM Dismisses ‘Fabricated’ Report about New Missile Test**

Iranian Defence Minister Brigadier General Hossein Dehqan rejected the media report that said the Islamic Republic has tested another ballistic missile, saying such claims are fabricated.

More Details:

<http://ifpnews.com/news/politics/security/2017/02/irans-dm-dismisses-fabricated-report-about-new-missile-test/>

- **Russia warns Iran could withdrawal from nuclear deal**

The Russian Foreign Ministry warned that Iran could withdraw from the nuclear deal due to the United States’ anti-Iran rhetoric. The ministry said this scenario would signal the failure of the

international community, stressing that Moscow has been in regular contact with the US and Iran to reduce tensions over the 2015 nuclear deal.

More Details:

<https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20170209-russia-warns-iran-could-withdrawal-from-nuclear-deal/>

- **Iran Tests Trump**

Iran is testing the weight of US President Donald J. Trump's words with its latest missile tests, said an Atlantic Council analyst.

More Details:

<http://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/new-atlanticist/iran-tests-trump>

- **Iran to become world's 17th largest economy by 2050**

Iran could become the 17th largest economy in the world by 2050 based on its gross domestic product (GDP) at purchasing power parity (PPP), PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC), one of world's biggest management consultancy firms, said in a report.

More Details:

<http://realiran.org/iran-to-become-17th-largest-economy-by-2050/>

4. ISRAEL – PALESTINE

- **Hamas welcomes Petah Tikva attack**

Hamas on Thursday welcomed the terrorist attack in Petah Tikva, in which six people were wounded. In a statement, the terrorist group which controls Gaza said the attack was a "natural response" to the "crimes" of Israel.

More Details

<http://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx/224758>

- **4 injured in reported shooting, stabbing attacks in Israel**

A 19-year-old Palestinian from the Nablus area village of Beita in the northern occupied West Bank was arrested late this afternoon at a market in the central Israeli town of Petah Tikva, in connection with reported shooting and stabbing attacks that have left four people injured, according to Israeli police.

More Details

<https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20170209-4-injured-in-reported-shooting-stabbing-attacks-in-israel/>

- **Opposition MK compares recent outpost law to pedophilia**

The chairwoman of Israel's largest opposition party caused an outcry Thursday when she compared a law passed this week legalizing illegal settlement outposts built on private Palestinian land in the West Bank to pedophilia.

More Details

<http://www.timesofisrael.com/opposition-mk-compares-recent-outpost-law-to-pedophilia/>

- **Israeli air strike kills 2 Palestinians**

An Israeli air strike killed two Palestinians on the Egyptian side of the border with Gaza early Thursday, the Gaza rulers Hamas said. Israel denied it had carried out any strikes over the border into Egypt's restive Sinai Peninsula.

More Details

<http://gulftoday.ae/portal/7c432a74-dcab-4893-9062-b73a1c7df31b.aspx>

- **Palestinian Opens Fire in Israeli Market, Injuring Four**

A Palestinian man opened fire in an Israeli market on Thursday, injuring four people, before being arrested by police, Israeli authorities said. Police spokesman Micky Rosenfeld said the man from the West Bank opened fire with an automatic weapon in the city of Petah Tikva, 10 km (six miles) east of Tel Aviv. He shot two people in the legs and two others were also injured.

More Details

<http://www.voanews.com/a/palestinian-opens-fire-israeli-market/3716704.html>

- **Israel's questioning of U.S. activist raises concerns of government pressure on groups**

The hourlong detention of a San Francisco Jewish community leader at Israel's largest international airport stirred accusations Thursday of a government campaign against organizations opposed to policies in the occupied West Bank.

More Details

<http://www.latimes.com/world/la-fg-israel-groups-20170209-story.html>

- **Canada worried by Israeli move to legalise colonies**

Canada is very concerned by Israel's move to legalise thousands of settler homes on Palestinian land in the occupied West Bank, Foreign Minister Chrystia Freeland said on Wednesday. The Liberal government of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, which took power in late 2015, is more prepared to criticise Israel than the former Conservative administration, which adopted a resolutely pro-Israel policy.

More Details

<http://gulftoday.ae/portal/abe28439-c90d-427f-8ca0-99f632ad4620.aspx>

- **Israeli man indicted for trying to cross into Gaza**

A 23-year-old Rehovot resident was indicted on Thursday for attempting to cross the border into the Gaza Strip the previous day. According to the indictment, the young man was carrying a backpack with two kitchen knives, clothes and cash money. He made it to the fence near Moshav Netiv HaAsara, where he attempted to cross the border.

More Details

<http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-4920396,00.html>

- **Hamas Raises Alert Level Following Eilat Rocket Attack**

A top Hamas official told Breitbart Jerusalem that the movement reinforced its deployment along the Egyptian border in a bid to block jihadists from crossing into Gaza to use the territory as a launching pad for attacks against Israel.

More Details

<http://www.breitbart.com/jerusalem/2017/02/09/hamas-raises-readiness-level-following-eilat-rocket-attack/>

5. JORDAN and LEBANON

- **Jordan parliament speaker praises Iran's efforts for Palestine**

In a meeting with Iran's Ambassador to Amman Mojtaba Ferdowsipour on Wednesday, he said that using parliamentary diplomacy in this concern is very important calling for expansion of parliamentary cooperation between the two countries.

More Details

<http://www.irna.ir/en/News/82424311/>

- **Jordan increases minimum wage, raises taxes to narrow deficit**

Jordan's Council of Ministers on Wednesday took a set of economic measures that included hiking fees and taxes as well as raising the minimum wage and cutting on expenses. The decisions included raising taxes on cigarettes, soft drinks and telecom services, as well as increasing fees to issue passports from JD20 to JD50.

More Details

<http://www.albawaba.com/business/jordan-increases-minimum-wage-raises-taxes-narrow-deficit-935784>

- **Unified Arab stance necessary to confront challenges: Jordanian Senate President**

A unified stance from Arab countries to confront challenges facing the Arab region and the Islamic world is imperative, Faisal Al Fayez, President of the Jordanian Senate, has said. In a statement to the Emirates News Agency (WAM), Al Fayez has stressed the importance of regional co-ordination to meet the challenges, achieve development, and find solutions to regional crises such as terrorism.

More Details

<http://wam.ae/en/details/1395302596509>

- **Jordan resorts to cloud seeding tech for water**

The promising results of a cloud seeding experiment using ionization technology have persuaded the Jordanian government to extend its use of the technology as figures showed improved rainfall. Jordan suffers from severe water shortages due to a decline in its renewable water resources and the widening gap between water demand and availability, especially after the large influx of refugees in recent years. It has become second among the world's most water-poor countries.

More Details

<http://www.scidev.net/global/water/news/jordan-cloud-seeding-tech-water.html>

- **Stronger Saudi-Lebanese ties bode well for tourism**

Saudi tourism to Lebanon is tipped to increase after a boost in diplomatic ties between the two nations. In a visit to Lebanon last month by Thamer Al-Sabhan, Saudi minister for Arabian Gulf Affairs, the diplomat told President Michel Aoun that Saudi Arabian Airlines would increase its flights to Beirut. Lebanese-Saudi relations have been troubled in recent years as a result of the Syrian crisis.

More Details

<http://www.arabnews.com/node/1052151/saudi-arabia>

- **Role reversal in Lebanon**

Ever since Lebanon's independence, Syria has been the key player in Lebanese politics, often even dictating the name of the Lebanese president. Historically, Lebanon was part of what was known as Greater Syria, and the distance between Beirut and Lebanon is shorter than that between any other two Arab capitals.

More Details

<http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/News/19599.aspx>

- **Will Lebanese Oil And Gas Ignite The Country?**

While the Eastern Mediterranean is well known for its major (and underexploited) gas reserves, Lebanon is the latest country in the region to join the oil rush, after Egypt's fitful entry into the market and Israel's more straightforward path to exporter status. Seismic surveys in 2013 estimated Lebanon's offshore fields to hold 96 trillion cubic feet of gas and 850 million barrels of oil. On January 27th, the government finally opened the bidding for five offshore blocks in a first licensing round, after a three-year delay brought upon by political instability.

More Details

<http://oilprice.com/Energy/Energy-General/Will-Lebanese-Oil-And-Gas-Ignite-The-Country.html>

- **Northern Ireland police training Lebanese security forces**

The Northern Irish police (PSNI) is helping train the Lebanese internal security forces (ISF) in improving its treatment of detainees and responses to complaints. Assistant Chief Constable Andrew Bridges, who has over 30 years experience in fighting the Northern Irish militant organisation, the Irish Republican Army (IRA), led the police delegation to Beirut on Tuesday to share their extensive experience in community policing.

More Details

<https://www.alaraby.co.uk/english/news/2017/2/9/improving-trust-northern-ireland-police-training-lebanese-security-forces>

- **Houry rebuffs Mikati's election law, says it's based on full proportionality**

Member of Parliament, Ammar Houry, said on Friday that Former Prime Minister Najib Mikati's election law proposal was totally out of question by the Future Movement due to the fact that it was based on full proportionality. Interviewed by the Voice of Lebanon radio station, the lawmaker even denied Prime Minister Saad Hariri's willingness to discuss Mikati's formula.

More Details:

<http://nna-leb.gov.lb/en/show-news/75177/Houry-rebuffs-Mikati-39-election-law-says-it-39-based-on-full-proportionality>

6. ARABIAN PENINSULA AND THE GULF OF BASRA

- **Saudi King Salman receives phone call from US secretary of state**

Saudi Arabia's King Salman bin Abdulaziz has received a phone call from the United States Secretary of State Rex Tillerson. King Salman began the conversation by congratulating Tillerson who in turn applauded Saudi Arabia's efforts in promoting stability across the region, a statement on Saudi Press Agency confirmed.

More details:

<https://english.alarabiya.net/en/News/gulf/2017/02/10/Saudi-King-Salman-receives-phone-call-from-US-secretary-of-state.html>

- **Bahrain prison-breakers captured after boat escape bid**

Bahraini forces recaptured several prisoners sprung from jail in a January prison break as they attempted to flee by boat on Thursday, the interior ministry said. On New Year's Day, four gunmen stormed the notorious Jau prison, south of the capital Manama, killing a policeman and freeing 10 inmates convicted of terrorism offences. "Security forces foiled at dawn today an attempt to smuggle terrorist fugitives and the Jau prison escapees," the ministry said.

More details:

<http://www.middleeasteye.net/news/bahrain-prison-breakers-captured-foiled-boat-escape-bid-1108189203>

- **In War-Torn Yemen, Hungry Children Turn to Begging**

After Mustafa's father was killed in Yemen's conflict between the government and Shiite Huthi rebels, the 15-year-old turned to begging to survive. He is just one of scores of Yemeni children who plead for donations at the rebel-held capital's road junctions every day to feed themselves and their siblings. Some have lost one or both parents in the war that escalated in 2015, while others seek to help parents whose public salaries have dried up in the conflict.

More details:

<http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/225196-in-war-torn-yemen-hungry-children-turn-to-begging>

- **Saudi Arabia playing positive role against terror: Tatarstan**

Saudi Arabia is playing a positive role in fighting terrorism, Tatarstan President Rustam Minnikhanov said Wednesday. He led a senior Tatar delegation that met with high-profile Saudi businessmen and leaders of the Jeddah Chamber of Commerce and Industry (JCCI) at the Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC).

More details:

<http://www.arabnews.com/node/1052016/saudi-arabia>

- **Qatar says oil market can cope with higher shale output**

Higher oil prices may boost shale oil production but the global oil market can accommodate this as demand remains healthy, Qatar's energy minister said on Wednesday. US energy companies have been adding oil rigs and redeploying cash and workers, cautiously confident the energy sector has turned a corner after the election of President Donald Trump and a commitment signed by OPEC to curb production in the first half of 2017.

More details:

<http://dailytimes.com.pk/business/09-Feb-17/qatar-says-oil-market-can-cope-with-higher-shale-output>

- **Iran-Oman gas pipeline to avoid UAE waters, online by 2020**

The Iran-Oman natural gas pipeline first proposed in 2013 is on track to come on-stream by 2020, officials from both country said, after a meeting in Tehran on Tuesday, in which they decided the exports line would bypass waters controlled by the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Kallanish Energy reports. Iran's oil minister Bijan Zangeneh was quoted by local media as saying that "Tehran and Muscat have agreed that the pipeline will pass through deep waters without crossing waters under the governance of the United Arab Emirates." The deep-water route won't have any impact on the economic feasibility of the project, he added.

More details:

<http://www.kallanishenergy.com/2017/02/09/iran-oman-gas-pipeline-to-avoid-uae-waters-online-by-2020/>

- **Oman invests more than \$200m in treating rising drug addiction**

Drug addiction in Oman is on the rise, prompting the government to invest more than \$200 million in the next five years, to double the number of beds in the country's only rehabilitation centre and build more facilities. The government is digging into its financial reserves to expand the existing drug rehab centre at Al Masarra Hospital from 100 beds to 200 beds this year. It is also planning to build

three more facilities in different parts of the country – Sohar, Sur and Salalah – in the next five years with a budget of US\$230m (Dh844m).

More details:

<http://www.thenational.ae/world/middle-east/oman-invests-more-than-200m-in-treating-rising-drug-addiction>

- **International organisations to host meetings at WGS 2017**

The fifth edition of the World Government Summit (WGS 2017) to run from Feb.12-14, under the patronage of His Highness Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, will host several meetings of leading global organisations. The meetings align with the summit's role as an international organisation that drives countries of the world to achieve prosperity for their people.

More details:

<http://gulftoday.ae/portal/55051fbe-1a78-4c7c-a41a-00394b4537fe.aspx>

- **Bahrain attends Yemen aid meet**

Permanent delegation of the Kingdom of Bahrain to Geneva, headed by Permanent Representative Ambassador Dr. Yousef Abdul Karim Bucheeri, and other international organisations took part in the Yemen Humanitarian Response Plan 2017 meeting organised by the Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. Ambassador Bucheeri spoke on behalf of the Gulf Cooperation Council in the meeting that falls within the framework of the plan of action of the United Nations and its partners working in the field of emergency relief with the aim of providing aid to the brotherly people of Yemen.

More details:

<http://www.newsofbahrain.com/viewNews.php?ppId=30313&TYPE=Posts&pid=21&MNU=2&SUB=2>

7. EGYPT

- **Police shut down El-Nadeem Centre: statement**

El-Nadeem Centre for the Rehabilitation of Victims of Violence said in a statement on Twitter on Thursday that police forces closed down the place and arrested the doorman of the building. "The centre was sealed with red wax. It is worth noting that it is the centre's weekly day off," El-Nadeem said. There have been previous attempts to shut down the centre. The centre provides assistance to victims of violence and issues reports on torture victims.

More details:

<http://www.dailynewsegypt.com/2017/02/09/police-shut-el-nadeem-centre-statement/>

- **Egyptian exports to Gaza signal better ties with Hamas**

Truckloads of goods ranging from steel to fish have rolled into the Gaza strip over the past several weeks. Egypt has eased restrictions at the tightly-controlled border with the enclave in a sign of improved relations with the Palestinian territory's Islamist rulers. For years, Egypt had insisted that the Rafah crossing -- which it opens for a three-to-five day period about once every 40 days -- would handle the passage of only people, not goods.

More details:

<http://www.egyptindependent.com//news/egyptian-exports-gaza-signal-better-ties-hamas>

- **'We will not allow sectarian affiliation inside the armed forces,' says Egypt's Sisi**

Egypt's President Abdel-Fattah El-Sisi has said he will not allow divisions, or organising along political, religious or sectarian lines among members of the Egyptian armed forces, saying that the Egyptian military will forever remain "the army of the nation." El-Sisi's statement came during a speech before the Egyptian Armed Forces 24th intellectual seminar titled Counter-terrorism; a Nation's Will on Thursday.

More details:

<http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/64/257859/Egypt/Politics-/We-will-not-allow-sectarian-affiliation-inside-the.aspx>

- **IS confirms it fired rockets at Israel's Eilat from Egypt**

The Islamic State group said on Thursday that it was responsible for rocket fire on the Israeli resort of Eilat from Egypt's Sinai Peninsula. "Thanks to God alone, a military platoon fired several Grad rockets yesterday" towards Eilat, the jihadists' Egyptian affiliate said in a statement circulated on social media.

More details:

<http://www.france24.com/en/20170209-confirms-it-fired-rockets-israels-eilat-egypt>

- **Russia, Egypt in dialog on wide range of military equipment**

Military-technical cooperation between Russia and Egypt is developing successfully, Russia's ambassador to Egypt, Sergey Kirpichenko told TASS in an interview. "Our military-technical cooperation with Egypt is developing successfully," the diplomat said. "Weapons and military

equipment are being supplied under the concluded contracts. A dialog is in progress on a wide range of military equipment Egypt might need for defense."

More details:

<http://tass.com/economy/930005>

- **UAE's Dana Gas freezes Egypt investments over debts**

Dana Gas will not make new investments in Egypt because of delays in obtaining payments owed to it there, the chief executive of the UAE company said. Political and economic turbulence in Egypt and Iraqi Kurdistan mean Dana has struggled to secure revenues in either country, once again hitting its profit on Thursday.

More details:

<http://www.arabianbusiness.com/uae-s-dana-gas-freezes-egypt-investments-over-debts-662765.html>

- **Exchanging accusations in parliament**

A one-month war of words between Egypt's Parliament Speaker Ali Abdel-Aal and independent MP Anwar Al-Sadat reached a crescendo this week. On Sunday Al-Sadat, who is also head of the liberal Reform and Development Party, was questioned by parliament's Ethics Committee over two accusations: the leaking of copies of a government-drafted NGO law to a number of foreign embassies in Cairo without receiving parliament's prior approval, and faking the signatures of some of his MP colleagues.

More details:

<http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/News/19615.aspx>

- **Why listing the Muslim Brotherhood as a terror group is a bad idea**

Want smart analysis of the most important news in your inbox every weekday along with other global reads, interesting ideas and opinions to know? Sign up for the Today's WorldView newsletter. Trump administration officials are contemplating an executive order that would call for the designation of the Muslim Brotherhood and Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps as terrorist organizations. It's a deeply provocative move that worries a wide spectrum of Middle East experts and counterterrorism analysts.

More details:

https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2017/02/10/why-listing-the-muslim-brotherhood-as-a-terror-group-is-a-bad-idea/?utm_term=.6c2c4b778938

- **Egyptian authorities shut down renowned torture rehabilitation centre**

Egyptian authorities closed the offices of a prominent human rights group on Thursday that helps victims of violence and torture. Al-Nadeem Centre for the Rehabilitation of Victims of Torture and Violence in Cairo offers psychological rehabilitation to victims of abuses including sexual assault. "About 15 policemen in official uniform with a group of civilians sealed three apartments in the building belonging to al-Nadeem," co-founder Aida Seif ElIDawla told AFP by phone.

More details:

<https://www.alaraby.co.uk/english/news/2017/2/9/egyptian-authorities-shut-down-renowned-torture-rehabilitation-centre>

- **Russian Ambassador: Moscow, Cairo Exchange Information on Settling Syrian Crisis**

"Egypt has been actively participating in the efforts aimed at finding a political solution to the Syrian crisis, it has particularly been tackling this issue's military aspects. Moscow, in turn, welcomes Egypt's activities, exchanging information with Cairo," the Russian diplomat said, TASS reported. According to him, information exchange began before the Astana meeting on settling the Syrian crisis and continues ahead of the Geneva meeting.

More details:

<http://en.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13951122000492>

8. NORTH AFRICA

- **Algeria to Build New Deepwater Port**

The Algerian government has approved plans for the construction of a new \$3.3 billion deep water port at El Hamdania.

More details:

<http://maritime-executive.com/article/algeria-to-build-new-deepwater-port>

- **Crown Prince Receives Algerian Ambassador to Riyadh**

Crown Prince Mohammed bin Naif bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, Deputy Premier and Minister of Interior received here today the Ambassador of the Republic of Algeria to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Ahmed Abdel-Saduq.

More details:

<http://sites.alriyadh.com/en/article/1155736/Crown-Prince-Receives-Algerian-Ambassador-to-Riyadh>

- **UN Chief Names Palestinian to Libya Post, Risking U.S. Objection**

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has told the Security Council that he intends to appoint former Palestinian Prime Minister Salam Fayyad as his special representative for Libya, risking a clash with the U.S. over a Palestinian holding such a senior position at the world body.

More details:

<https://www.bloomberg.com/politics/articles/2017-02-10/un-chief-names-palestinian-to-libya-post-risking-u-s-objection>

- **UNICEF and CNDH Mobilize for Children Rights in Morocco**

Signed by CNDH President Driss El Yazami, and UNICEF Representative in Morocco Regina De Dominicis, the action plan laid the foundation for a two-year-long strategic program aiming to strengthen the national capacities for independent monitoring and reporting on the situation of children's rights in Morocco in accordance with international standards, with the participation of the children themselves.

More details:

<https://www.morocoworldnews.com/2017/02/207787/uniced-and-cndh-mobilize-for-children-rights-in-morocco/>

- **Libya National Guards formed from western armed factions**

A number of different armed groups mainly from Misrata have announced the formation of the Libyan National Guards (LNG). Reports claim that dozens of Misratan vehicles entered the capital Tripoli overnight.

More details:

<http://www.digitaljournal.com/news/world/op-ed-libya-national-guards-formed-from-western-armed-factions/article/485533#ixzz4YGj2bAPw>

- **Former Tunisian president given 10 years for corruption**

Tunisian ex-president Zine el Abidine Ben Ali and his wife, Leila Trabelsi, were issued new 10-year prison sentences for corruption on Thursday, authorities said, according to AFP.

More details:

<http://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx/224753>

- **Construction of protection system along Tunisian-Libyan border deemed insufficient by Elizabeth Guigou**

President of the Foreign Affairs Committee at the French National Assembly Elizabeth Guigou, on Thursday, deemed insufficient the construction of a protection system along the Tunisian-Libyan border considering that it was necessary to actively engage the Intelligence services in the fight against terrorism.

More details:

<http://www.tap.info.tn/en/Portal-Politics/8698435-construction-of>

- **Venezuelan Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Oil on visit Saturday to Algiers**

Venezuelan Minister of Foreign Affairs Delcy Eloina Rodriguez Gomez and that of Oil and Mining Nelson Martinez will pay Saturday a working visit to Algeria, said Thursday Foreign Affairs Ministry in a communiqué.

More details:

<http://en.aps.dz/algeria/16618-venezuelan-ministers-of-foreign-affairs,-oil-on-visit-saturday-to-algiers>

- **President Caïd Essebsi meets members of Tunisian community in Rome**

President Beji Caïd Essebsi, on Thursday, urged members of the Tunisian community in Italy to promote the image of Tunisia, enhance its reputation in their host country and preserve the good reputation they enjoy.

More details:

<http://www.tap.info.tn/en/Portal-Politics/8698403-president-caid>

9. AFGHANISTAN – PAKISTAN

- **Kabul terrorist attacks mastermind dead in security forces raid**

Afghan and foreign security forces in a joint raid have killed notorious. Daesh Commander Qari Munib, a statement from Presidential Palace said on Friday.

More details:

<http://www.pajhwok.com/en/2017/02/10/kabul-terrorist-attacks-mastermind-dead-security-forces-raid>

- **Russia Ready to Cooperate With US, NATO Over Afghanistan**

Russian president's special envoy to Afghanistan, Zamir Kabulov, has said that Russia is ready to restore cooperation with the U.S. and NATO on the settlement of common tasks in Afghanistan, Russia's TASS reported on Friday.

More details:

<http://www.tolonews.com/afghanistan/russia-ready-restore-cooperation-us-nato-afghanistan>

- **Trump talks with Afghan president on telephone**

Afghan President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani and U.S. President Donald Trump talked on the telephone Thursday night and discussed several issues including war against terrorism and extremism, the Afghan presidential palace said Friday.

More details:

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-02/10/c_136046895.htm

- **Haqqani, Taliban leaders enjoy freedom of actions in Pakistan: US commander**

The top US commander in Afghanistan General John Nicholson has said the Taliban and Haqqani network leaders are enjoying freedom of action within Pakistan safe havens.

More details:

<http://www.khaama.com/haqqani-taliban-leaders-enjoy-freedom-of-actions-in-pakistan-us-commander-02851>

- **IUCN GC elects Pakistani activist as VP**

The 36-Member IUCN's Global Council in its first meeting held Wednesday at Gland, Switzerland has elected Pakistan's environmentalist Malik Amin Aslam Khan as IUCN's Global Vice President (VP) for the period 2017-2020.

More details:

<http://pakobserver.net/iucn-gc-elects-pakistani-activist-as-vp/>

- **Afghanistan: ICRC halts operations after workers killed**

Red Cross suspends some activities in Afghanistan after gunmen attacked a convoy in Jowzjan and killed six staff.

More details:

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/02/afghanistan-icrc-halts-operations-workers-killed-170209062643029.html>

- **Afghan military would support more foreign troops, official says**

The Afghan Defence Ministry welcomed on Friday suggestions by the commander of international forces in Afghanistan that more troops were needed to train Afghan security forces, who are battling to hold back a growing Taliban-led insurgency.

More details:

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-trump-afghanistan-idUSKBN15P0M9>

- **PM Nawaz meets 38 CEOs of foreign companies**

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif held a meeting with 38 Chief Executive Officers of foreign companies in Islamabad today.

More details:

<http://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2017/02/09/pm-nawaz-meets-38-ceos-of-foreign-companies/>

- **V.K. Singh reveals possibility of 74 missing defence personnel in Pak**

In a startling revelation, Minister of State for External Affairs, General V.K. Singh exposed the possibility of 74 missing defence personnel who could be in Pakistan Custody.

More details:

<http://www.dnaindia.com/india/report-vk-singh-reveals-possibility-of-74-missing-defence-personnel-in-pak-2318163>

- **Hunt for two Red Cross workers after deadly Afghan ambush**

The Red Cross was desperately searching for two employees who went missing after their convoy came under insurgent fire in northern Afghanistan, leaving six other workers dead, the charity said Friday.

More details:

<http://thepeninsulaqatar.com/article/10/02/2017/Hunt-for-two-Red-Cross-workers-after-deadly-Afghan-ambush>

10. TURKEY AND THE MIDDLE EAST

- **Russian jets mistakenly target Turkish soldiers near al-Bab, 3 killed, 11 injured**

Russia confirmed that its fighter jets mistakenly targeted Turkish soldiers near Syria's al-Bab on Thursday, killing three soldiers and wounding 11 others. In a statement released by the Turkish General Staff, the military also confirmed the incident and said that a bomb mistakenly hit a building where Turkish forces were located in while a Russian warplane was targeting Daesh positions in al-Bab.

More Details:

<http://www.dailysabah.com/politics/2017/02/09/russian-jets-mistakenly-target-turkish-soldiers-near-al-bab-3-killed-11-injured>

- **23 Daesh terrorists 'neutralized' in northern Syria**

At least 23 Daesh terrorists were "neutralized" in northern Syria in the last 24 hours as part of the ongoing Operation Euphrates Shield, according to a Turkish General Staff statement released early Friday. Turkish authorities often use the word "neutralized" in their statements to imply the terrorist in question was either killed or captured.

More Details:

<http://aa.com.tr/en/middle-east/23-daesh-terrorists-neutralized-in-northern-syria/746350>

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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ORTADOĐU STRATEJİK ARAŐTIRMALAR MERKEZİ
CENTER FOR MIDDLE EASTERN STRATEGIC STUDIES
مرکز الشرق الأوسط للدراسات الاستراتيجية