



MIDDLE EAST DAILY BULLETIN

GÜNLÜK ORTADOĐU BÜLTENİ

Domestic Policy in the Middle East Countries

Bölge Ülkelerinde İç Siyaset

The Restructuring Proces of Iraq

Irak'ın Yeniden Yapılanma Süreci

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1. IRAQ

- **British Secretary of State for Middle East and Africa Arrives In Baghdad**

British Secretary of State for Middle East and Africa, Tobias Ellwood arrived in Baghdad on Tuesday morning." Ellwood is scheduled to meet Foreign Minister Ibrahim al-Jaafari and a number of Iraqi officials to discuss relations between the two countries and the international issues of mutual interest," a foreign ministry source told the National Iraqi News Agency (NINA).

More Details:

http://www.ninanews.com/News_Details.aspx?YfSYWNmHIJBhTAn8D5uZWw%253d%253d

- **3 children die as refugees queue up outside Kirkuk's Hawija**

Three children died Tuesday due to food and medicine shortages as refugee convoys from Kirkuk's Islamic State stronghold town of Hawija were stranded outside the province's center. A local source at Kirkuk's municipal council told Alsumaria News that the three children died due to the lack of foodstuff and medicine supplies for 600 refugees who fled Hawija to the province. He said the refugees were held at the Khaled crossing for ten days.

More Details:

<http://www.iraqinews.com/iraq-war/3-children-die-refugees-queue-outside-kirkuks-hawija/>

- **IS Weapons Cache Discovered in West Mosul**

While the fight against the Islamic State (IS) in Mosul is continuing to retake the entire city from the IS extremists, a weapons cache was found which contained a large number of mortars and other types of ammunition. The cache which was discovered by the Iraqi army in west Mosul contained around 700 mortars.

More Details:

<http://www.basnews.com/index.php/en/news/iraq/342512>

- **Gabbard: 'We need to learn from Iraq'**

Rep. Tulsi Gabbard (D-Hawaii) has a message for the liberals attacking her criticism of President Trump's missile strike on Syria, warning that a rush to aggression risks repeating the same mistakes that led the United States into the Iraq War. "We need to learn from Iraq and Libya — wars that were propagated as necessary to relieve human suffering, but actually increased human suffering many times over," she said in an email to The Hill.

More Details:

http://www.shafaaq.com/en/En_NewsReader/0b74484a-1c89-4319-b485-b615c1b2e731/Gabbard--%E2%80%98We-need-to-learn-from-Iraq%E2%80%99

- **Referendum cannot be held in Kirkuk; says al-Abadi**

The Iraqi Prime Minister Hider al-Abadi said in his weekly press conference that the referendum cannot be held in Kirkuk, as the Islamic State terrorist group still occupy areas in the province and as thousands of civilians from the province are displaced. Al-Abadi called for dialogue and cooperation in order to resolve the disputed area issue.

More Details:

http://www.pukmedia.com/EN/EN_Direje.aspx?Jimare=40193

- **Lawmakers seek to keep Abdul Latif Al-Humim as head of Sunni Waqf**

A number of Iraqi lawmakers are rallying support inside the parliament to keep Abdul Latif Al-Humim as chief of the Sunni Waqf (endowment) in the country, sources told the Baghdad Post. The move comes after the harsh criticism leveled at Al-Humim recently. Over 25 lawmakers started a campaign not to unseat the incumbent chief of Sunni Waqf after calls for his resignation emerged, the sources added.

More Details:

<http://www.thebaghdadpost.com/en/story/9239/Lawmakers-seek-to-keep-Abdul-Latif-Al-Humim-as-head-of-Sunni-Waqf>

- **More than 40 ISIL terrorists killed by Iraqi airstrike in west Mosul**

More than 40 Islamic State (ISIL) terrorists were killed by the Iraqi Air Force in the western countryside of Mosul, local activists reported on Tuesday evening. According to the reports, the Iraqi Air Force targeted the Islamic State's gathering points around the Tanak and Thuwra areas of western Mosul, killing 40+ terrorists in the process of this powerful aerial assault.

More Details:

<https://www.almasdarnews.com/article/40-isil-terrorists-killed-iraqi-airstrike-west-mosul/>

- **Qatari pays \$2m for information on royals abducted in Iraq**

A member of Qatar's ruling family has paid \$2 million to a US security company to secure "proof of life" and ultimately free relatives and others kidnapped in Iraq more than a year ago. Gunmen kidnapped about two dozen Qataris and support staff who were taking part in a falconry hunt near the Saudi border in December 2015.

More Details:

<http://www.thenational.ae/world/middle-east/qatari-pays-2m-for-information-on-royals-abducted-in-iraq>

- **Coalition strike kills 3 family members in Iraq's Mosul**

Three members of the same family were killed by a U.S.-led coalition in Iraq's northern city of Mosul, according to a local anti-terrorism officer. Two other family members were injured in the strike, which targeted Al-Sikak district in western Mosul on Monday, Lieutenant Yahya Hamid told Anadolu Agency.

More Details:

<http://aa.com.tr/en/middle-east/coalition-strike-kills-3-family-members-in-iraq-s-mosul/794569>

- **HUFF: President Trump's Kurdish Policy Takes Shape in Iraq, Syria**

Just after the election, Breitbart published an analysis arguing that President Donald J. Trump was a cause for hope for Kurdish national aspirations. It has been 81 days since the inauguration, so, has the outlook improved for the American-Kurdish alliance? As the roll-out of a revamped American strategy to bring a swift defeat to the Islamic State (ISIS) continues, the unanswered question of the Kurdish role looms as one of the largest unknowns.

More Details:

<http://www.breitbart.com/national-security/2017/04/11/president-trumps-kurdish-policy-takes-shape-in-iraq-syria/>

- **'I'll kill myself if they send us back to Iraq', says refugee mother facing deportation with her three children**

"I like school and football... rugby," says 12-year-old Muhammad Razzaq before he bursts into tears. He cries because after his father froze to death on their journey from Iraq to a new life, in 2015 he now faces losing everything again. This time he dreads saying goodbye to his cousins and his uncle Aram Faraj, who acts as a father figure in his life, and who has the legal right to live here that Muhammad is denied.

More Details:

<http://www.itv.com/news/2017-04-11/ill-kill-myself-if-they-send-us-back-to-iraq-says-refugee-mother-facing-deportation-with-her-three-children/>

- **Iraq: battle for western Mosul hampered by ISIL tactics**

The so-called Islamic State group now only controls less than a fifth of the territory it held in Iraq in 2014, according to an Iraqi military spokesman. The claim comes amid reports that the battle for western Mosul is turning out to be far more difficult than the campaign to retake the east. Iraqi artillery units and coalition airstrikes seeking out ISIL militants have been targeting the area.

More Details:

http://www.euronews.com/2017/04/11/iraq-battle-for-western-mosul-hampered-by-isil-tactics?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+euronews%2Fen%2Fnews+%28euronews+-+news+-+en%29

- **Canadian expert advises Iraq on post-IS education reform**

A Canadian researcher has travelled to Iraq to advise government officials on how it can reform the education system to better combat militancy, especially in areas previously held by the Islamic State (IS) group. Herman Debarice-Okomba, executive director of the Centre for the Prevention of Radicalization Leading to Violence in Montreal, said education was used by IS as a tool for indoctrination.

More Details:

<http://www.middleeasteye.net/news/canadian-expert-advises-iraq-post-education-reform-128095289>

- **Daesh now controls 'less than 7% of Iraq'**

Daesh now controls less than 7 percent of Iraq; down from the 40 percent it held nearly three years ago, a military spokesman said Tuesday. "Daesh controlled 40 percent of Iraqi land" in 2014, Brig. Gen. Yahya Rasool told reporters.

More Details:

<http://www.arabnews.com/node/1083081/middle-east>

- **Iran, Iraq discuss bilateral defense relations**

Iranian deputy defense minister in a meeting with Iraqi defense minister called for strengthening bilateral relations in defensive affairs. The Iranian Deputy Defense Minister Ghasem Taghizadeh met the Iraqi Minister of Defense Erfan al-Hiyali in Baghdad on Tuesday.

More Details:

<http://www.irna.ir/en/News/82489948/>

- **Daesh losing ground in Iraq is good news: paper**

A UAE newspaper has said that it is comforting to note that the brutal organisation Daesh has lost most of the territory it held in Iraq since 2014 and now controls less than seven percent, down from the 40 percent it held nearly three years ago. It should be completely eliminated at the earliest. According to Brigadier General Yahya Rasool, Spokesman of the Joint Operations Command, Daesh holds only 6.8 percent of Iraqi territory.

More Details:

<http://wam.ae/en/details/1395302608188>

- **Street turned to Rubble shows cost of Fight for Iraq's Mosul**

Two houses are all that remain standing on the street with no name in western Mosul, just blocks from the front lines of the battle to retake Iraq's second-largest city from the Islamic State group. The once-bustling neighborhood has been reduced to rubble, its sidewalks piled high with a jumble of concrete, bricks and metal.

More Details:

http://hosted.ap.org/dynamic/stories/M/ML_MOSUL_DEVASTATED_STREET?SITE=AP&SECTION=HOME&TEMPLATE=DEFAULT

- **Iraq: Moqtada al-Sadr warns Assad could face same fate as Gaddafi**

Iraqi cleric Moqtada al-Sadr on Tuesday warned Syrian President Bashar al-Assad that he risked suffering the same fate as slain Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi if he did not step down. The maverick cleric had last week condemned the suspected deadly use of chemical weapons by Assad's forces against civilians, becoming a rare Shia leader to openly challenge the Syrian president's legitimacy.

More Details:

<http://www.albawaba.com/news/iraq-moqtada-al-sadr-warns-assad-could-face-same-fate-gaddafi-961772>

2. SYRIA

- **Russia seeks to "save face" in Syria - U.S. envoy to UN**

Nikki Haley, the US envoy to the United Nations, is characterizing Russia as skittish and isolated in the wake of Syrian leader Bashar al-Assad's deadly chemical weapon attack last week that killed scores of civilians, including children, according to CNN.

More Details:

<https://www.unian.info/politics/1872686-russia-seeks-to-save-face-in-syria-us-envoy-to-un.html>

- **UN calls for urgent access to reach some 400,000 civilians trapped in Syria's Ghouta region**

The United Nations has voiced concern over the impact of deteriorating security and humanitarian situation on the lives some 400,000 people trapped in eastern Ghouta in Syria, underlining the need to ensure that humanitarians have unrestricted access to the affected areas. Stephane Dujarric, the spokesman for the UN Secretary-General, said, "There have been continued reports of heavy aerial bombardment and artillery shelling which have resulted in civilian deaths and injuries."

More Details:

<http://wam.ae/en/details/1395302608195>

- **Syria will pay heavy price for use of chemical weapons: US**

US defence secretary Jim Mattis has said that Syria will pay a "very, very stiff price" if it used chemical weapons again and asserted that America's top priority in Syria remained fighting the Islamic State militant group. "If they use chemical weapons, they are going to pay a very, very stiff price," Mattis told reporters during his first Pentagon briefing as defence chief. Notwithstanding the Russian allegations that the US is selling a false narrative over the use of chemical weapons by the authoritarian Syrian regime, Mattis defended the American missile attacks against Syria last week.

More Details:

<http://www.livemint.com/Politics/rZgPYXkLbGDPA5siVrW50/Syria-will-pay-heavy-price-for-use-of-chemical-weapons-US.html>

- **UN Security Council to vote on West-drafted resolution on Syria chemical attack**

The UN Security Council (UNSC) is set to vote on a west-drafted resolution on the Syria chemical weapon attack amid expectations that Russia would veto the move. Jointly prepared by the US, the UK and France, the draft would be taken up by the UNSC on Wednesday, 12 April. With the western world and Moscow supporting rival parties in the longstanding Syrian conflict, the UNSC vote is not expected to provide any major breakthrough. The US-led western powers want the Syrian regime to cooperate with an international investigation into the recent sarin gas attack in Khan Sheikhoun in Idlib province. Russia has blamed anti-Assad rebels for the incident.

More Details:

<http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/un-security-council-vote-west-drafted-resolution-syria-chemical-attack-1616637>

- **Chemical or not, Syria is dying**

Then U.S. President Barack Obama said, "I want to make it absolutely clear to Assad and those under his command - the world is watching," during a speech at the National Defense University in Washington on Dec. 4, 2012. This was a warning against the possible use of chemical weapons by the Assad regime. That attack came on Aug. 21, 2013 in Ghouta near Damascus, killing at least 1,500 people including women and children. Five years on, Assad has killed far more people than any other criminal in recent history. He has done it with both chemical and conventional weapons while the world was "watching."

More Details:

<https://www.dailysabah.com/columns/ibrahim-kalin/2017/04/12/chemical-or-not-syria-is-dying>

- **Iran, Syria stress on intensifying anti-terrorism operations**

Iranian Defense Minister Brigadier General Hossein Dehghan and his Syrian counterpart Fahd Jassem al-Freij exchanged views on Syrian crisis through a phone call on Tuesday. Following the two sides' periodic consultations over the phone, Dehghan and al-Freij touched upon increasing coordination to improve bilateral cooperation over the military operations against terrorists.

More Details:

<http://en.mehrnews.com/news/124725/Iran-Syria-stress-on-intensifying-anti-terrorism-operations>

- **Defeating Daesh Still US Priority In Syria: Pentagon Chief**

The US is still focused on defeating Daesh in Syria, US Defence Secretary James Mattis said Tuesday, days after US missile strikes on a Syria airbase, China's Xinhua news agency reported. "Our military policy in Syria has not changed. Our priority remains the defeat of ISIS (IS-Daesh). ISIS represents a clear and present danger, an immediate threat to Europe and ultimately, a threat to the US homeland," Mattis said at his first Pentagon news conference as defence chief.

More Details:

<http://www.bernama.com/bernama/v8/wn/newsworld.php?id=1346825>

- **Russian Armed Forces Destroy 74 Terrorist Targets in Syria - MoD**

According to Konashenkov, Russian Armed Forces fired 128 missiles on terrorists positions in Syria and destroyed 74 targets. "Russian Armed Forces fired 128 cruise missiles under counterterrorist operation in Syria. Their targets were the most 'sensitive' to the terrorists 74 facilities, spread out geographically and carefully camouflaged: the headquarters, the largest warehouses of weapons and material possessions, the accumulation of equipment," Konashenkov said, adding that all these targets were successfully struck, while the terrorists were eliminated.

More Details:

<https://sputniknews.com/middleeast/201704121052549308-russia-74-targets-syria/>

- **U.S. missile strike on Syria violated international laws: Putin**

Condemning the missile attack by the United States on a Syrian airbase, Russian President Vladimir Putin has stated the development was clear evidence of international law violation by Washington. On April 6, 59 US Tomahawk cruise missiles were fired at a Syrian government airbase and President Donald Trump said that the strikes were carried out in a response to a chemical attack on civilians in Idlib that killed over 80 people including children.

More Details:

<http://www.aninews.in/newsdetail-NA/MzA4Nzgw/u-s-missile-strike-on-syria-violated-international-laws-putin.html>

- **Chinese President affirms in telephone call with Trump that solving crisis in Syria should be through political means**

Chinese President Xi Jinping called for adopting the political solution to the crisis in Syria. In a telephone call with his US counterpart Donald Trump on Wednesday, President Jinping said that China supports solving the crisis in Syria through political means and this solution must be adhered to.

More Details:

<http://sana.sy/en/?p=104127>

3. IRAN

- **Registration Starts for Iran's Presidential Election**

Candidates started on Tuesday enrollment for the upcoming presidential election in Iran slated for May 19. The presidential candidates can enroll for presidential elections on April 11-16. The 12th presidential election and also the 5th elections for the city and village councils as well as the parliamentary run-off for some constituencies will be held on May 19.

More Details:

<http://en.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13960122000428>

- **Iran ex-president registers for upcoming elections**

Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, Iran's former two-time president has registered to contest the 12th round of presidential elections in the country. Ahmadinejad, who filled the role of the country's chief executive for two consecutive mandates starting in 2005, signed up for the competition at the Election Office, which is based within the Interior Ministry's premises in the capital Tehran on Wednesday.

More Details:

<http://www.presstv.ir/Detail/2017/04/12/517731/Iran-Ahmadinejad-Presidential-Elections-Rouhani>

- **EU 'politicizing' human rights issue in Iran**

Foreign ministry spokesperson has criticized the EU's extension of human rights-related sanctions against Iran for another year. Mr. Bahram Ghasemi told reporters in his official response to extension that the EU had only a state of mind about Iran's human rights condition, and thus developed an inaccurate and distorted image of what had happened in Iran; "the extension of sanctions is seen in Tehran as using the issue as an instrument; the EU had politicized the issue, a policy which will not change anything and is an aborted measure," Ghasemi objected.

More Details:

<http://en.mehrnews.com/news/124739/EU-politicizing-human-rights-issue-in-Iran>

- **G-7 seeks Iran's help to stabilize Middle East**

The Group of Seven foreign ministers who met in the Italian city of Lucca on Tuesday urged Iran to help end the conflicts in the Middle politically, IRNA reported. In their final statement, the foreign minister also requested Iran's help to fight terrorism in the region. "We want Iran to play a constructive role in the region through support for political solutions, reconciliation and peace in Syria, Iraq and Yemen and other regions....and cooperation in the campaign against the spread of terrorism and extremism," part of the statement said, according to a translation of the statement posted on the IRNA Persian website.

More Details:

<http://www.tehrantimes.com/news/412539/G-7-seeks-Iran-s-help-to-stabilize-Middle-East>

- **Iran Army to hold major maneuvers**

Iran Army Ground Forces are to hold specialized and field drills, said the commander of the forces Brigadier General Kiomars Heidari on Wednesday. "During the drills, exercises suitable for several threats will be practiced," Brigadeir General Heidari said in a press conference on the occasion of the Iran National Army Day (April 18).

More Details:

<http://www.irna.ir/en/News/82490472/>

- **President: Improving ties with neighbors top priority**

Iranian President Hassan Rouhani said on Tuesday that improvement of relations with the neighboring countries, particularly Russia, Azerbaijan Republic and the Caspian Sea littoral states, is a top priority of his administration. President Rouhani made the remarks in a ceremony in the northern province of Mazandaran. Forty-three infrastructural projects were inaugurated in the ceremony, IRNA reported.

More Details:

<http://www.iran-daily.com/News/190676.html>

- **IRGC arrests perpetrators of commander's assassination**

Iranian security forces have arrested two perpetrators of a recent attack on a commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) in the country's southeastern region, Tasnim news agency reported. Commander Rouhollah Aali was killed by "two Takfiri terrorists" while traveling to the Kurin District of Zahedan County in Iran's Sistan-and-Baluchestan Province on April 10.

More Details:

<http://en.trend.az/iran/politics/2741218.html>

- **18,000 Women Applicants Register for Iran's Local Elections**

According to a Farsi report by Khabar Online News Agency, the head of Iran's Elections Headquarters, Ali Asghar Ahmadi, declared that over 18,000 Iranian women have signed up to compete in Iran's City and Village Councils Elections. City and Village Councils are local councils elected by public vote in all Iranian cities and villages. Council members in each city or village are elected by direct public vote to a 4-year term. According to Article 7 of the Iranian Constitution, these local councils together with the Iranian Parliament are decision-making and administrative organs of the state.

More Details:

<http://ifpnews.com/exclusive/2017/04/18000-women-register-irans-elections/>

- **President Inaugurates Development Projects North of Iran**

Iranian President Hassan Rouhani inaugurated 43 new projects in the country's northern province of Mazandaran on Tuesday. Tens of projects in Mazandaran came into service and a number of others began to be implemented on the president's order via a video conference.

More Details:

<https://www.tasnimnews.com/en/news/2017/04/11/1376517/president-inaugurates-development-projects-north-of-iran>

- **Iran's defense minister discusses US raid with Russia, Syria counterparts**

The Iranian defense minister has in separate phone calls with his Russian and Syrian opposite numbers exchanged views about the recent US airstrikes against a Syrian army air base, with the trio stressing the importance of boosting cooperation for a resolute campaign against terrorists.

More Details:

<http://parstoday.com/en/news/iran-i50112-iran%E2%80%99s-defense-minister-discusses-us-raid-with-russia-syria-counterparts>

- **President Rouhani to the Press: We Promote Free Speech and Culture**

President Hassan Rouhani defended his administration's policies and responded to criticisms about the recent crackdown on free expression in Iran during a press conference on April 10. The briefing for over 200 local and international journalists was seen by many as the unofficial launch of Rouhani's campaign for re-election on May 19.

More Details:

<https://iranwire.com/en/features/4538>

4. ISRAEL – PALESTINE

- **Abbas lauds Bahrain's support for Palestine**

The Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas yesterday expressed sincere thanks and appreciation to His Majesty King Hamad and the Kingdom of Bahrain, for their constant support to the Palestinian cause on all occasions and their keenness to reach a just solution to the issue.

More details:

<http://www.newsofbahrain.com/viewNews.php?ppId=32237&TYPE=Posts&pid=21&MNU=2&SUB=2>

- **Pakistani Pres. Urges OIC to play role in resolving Palestine, Kashmir**

Pakistani President Mamnoon Hussain on Tuesday urged Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) to play a proactive role in resolving the two oldest disputes of Palestine and Kashmir.

More details:

<http://www.kuna.net.kw/ArticleDetails.aspx?id=2602014&Language=en>

- **Israel reopens commercial crossing with Gaza after 2-day closure**

Israeli authorities on Wednesday reopened the Karem Abu Salam (Kerem Shalom) commercial crossing between Israel and the southeastern Gaza Strip after two days of closure, while civilian passage for Palestinians in the occupied West Bank and Gaza would remained closed until April 17 for the Jewish holiday of Passover.

More details:

<http://www.maannews.com/Content.aspx?ID=776398>

- **Israel Minister Accepts Sean Spicer Apology for Hitler Remark**

A senior member of Israel's government welcomed on Wednesday White House spokesman Sean Spicer's apology for saying Adolf Hitler did not use chemical weapons, comments that overlooked the killing of millions of Jews in Nazi gas chambers.

More details:

<http://forward.com/fast-forward/368832/israel-minister-accepts-sean-spicer-apology-for-hitler-remark/>

- **Israel arrests Hamas officials in West Bank raid**

Israeli security forces arrested a Palestinian parliamentarian and a spokesman from the Hamas terror group in the West Bank city of Ramallah early Wednesday morning, reports in Hebrew and Arabic language media said.

More details:

<http://www.timesofisrael.com/israel-arrests-hamas-officials-in-west-bank-raid/>

- **Israel kept US in the dark over its activities, declassified CIA documents reveal**

The Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) was unable to glean many secrets about Israel, newly declassified documents reveal. Around 1 million previously unseen documents recently released by the US spy agency illustrate the nature of the relationship between the two allies. They reveal that the CIA established a dedicated team to assess the physical and mental health of world leaders including Soviet Union general secretaries, France's Francois Mitterrand and former Cuban president Fidel Castro.

More details:

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/israel-uk-dark-intelligence-activities-golda-meir-declassified-cia-documents-francois-mitterrand-a7678781.html>

- **Asylum seekers ask Israel for 'FREEDOM' at Passover**

Friday, before Passover began, 150 detainees in the Negev's Holot Detention Center spelled out the words "FREEDOM" and "Freedom for Refugees," the latter in Hebrew, to raise awareness for the cause of asylum seekers. Passover is also known as the Festival of Freedom.

More details:

<http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-4948098,00.html>

- **Construction of Illegal West Bank Settlement Outpost Frozen by Israel's Top Court**

Israel's top court ordered an immediate halt to any construction in the illegal outpost of Kerem Re'im in the central West Bank. This includes any marketing or promotion of this illegal construction. Several dozen families live in the outpost, which lies near the settlement of Talmon, within the jurisdiction of the Binyamin Regional Council.

More details:

<http://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/1.782896>

- **On Missile-Hit Warship, Israel Readies for Hizbullah, Hamas Threat**

White specks appear on the horizon and a voice crackles over the radio with a warning: "The speed boat is acting independently." Two boats on suicide bombing missions had been spotted either side of the INS Hanit, one of the Israeli navy's top warships.

More details:

<http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/on-missile-hit-warship-israel-readies-for-all-threats/articleshow/58122041.cms>

- **South African Youth Leader Rejects Apartheid Slander against Israel**

A South African youth leader has strongly rebuked the charge that Israel is an apartheid state and called on activists to stop appropriating the term when describing its conflict with the Palestinians, The Times of Israel reported Monday.

More details:

<http://www.thetower.org/4846oc-south-african-youth-leader-rejects-apartheid-slander-against-israel/>

5. JORDAN and LEBANON

- **Amnesty Chief Lauds Lebanon on Refugees, Warns against 'Xenophobia'**

The head of the Amnesty International rights group on Tuesday applauded Lebanon for hosting more than a million refugees from neighboring Syria but warned against what he called “xenophobic talk.” Praising Lebanon for its welcome of refugees, Amnesty International chief Salil Shetty told AFP that his group would continue pressuring the international community to provide greater assistance to the government to absorb spiraling costs.

More details:

<http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/228365-amnesty-chief-lauds-lebanon-on-refugees-warns-against-xenophobia>

- **Deadly clashes erupt at Palestinian camp in Lebanon**

A fourth day of violence at the largest Palestinian refugee camp in Lebanon has claimed two more lives and injured many more. Six people have now been killed and 35 injured since fighting began at Ain al-Hilweh on Friday.

More details:

<http://www.aljazeera.com/video/news/2017/04/deadly-clashes-erupt-palestinian-camp-lebanon-170411052014811.html>

- **Lebanon: Bilal Badr under Protection of 'Fatah Al-Islam'**

Clashes in the Ain el-Hilweh Palestinian refugee camp in southern Lebanon came to a halt on Tuesday after Lebanese and Palestinian parties forced the Fatah Movement to accept a deal that ends the clashes with the “Bilal Badr” group. The deal stipulates dismantling the security square in the Tiri neighborhood in exchange for allowing Bilal Badr to flee with his supporters to another neighborhood.

More details:

<http://english.aawsat.com/p-astatih/news-middle-east/lebanon-bilal-badr-protection-fatah-al-islam>

- **Lebanon urged to extend parliament's mandate ahead of polls**

Parliament member Nicolas Fattoush Tuesday proposed an urgent draft law to renew the Parliament's mandate for a year, the National News Agency (NNA) reported. Fattoush, a lawmaker representing the Bekaa's Zahle district, presented a draft proposal to Parliament's Secretariat to extend the legislative body's mandate until June 2018.

More details:

http://www.china.org.cn/world/2017-04/11/content_40601043.htm

- **Lebanon Army order evicts 3,000 Syrian refugees from camps**

Around 3,000 Syrian refugees have left their tents in Lebanon's Bekaa Valley after oral eviction orders issued last month by the army, Human Rights Watch (HRW) told AFP on Tuesday. Lebanon is home to over 1 million Syrian refugees, many of whom live in informal tented settlements set up on private agricultural land across the country.

More details:

<http://www.arabnews.com/node/1083041/middle-east>

- **Jordan, US discuss partnership, regional peace**

Deputising for His Majesty King Abdullah, HRH Prince Feisal on Tuesday met with the US House of Representatives Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, chaired by Darrell Issa (R-California), the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported. During the meeting, held at Al Husseinia Palace and attended by Royal Court Chief Fayez Tarawneh, Prince Feisal and the delegation discussed cooperation between the two countries within the context of strategic Jordanian-US partnership.

More details:

<http://www.jordantimes.com/news/local/jordan-us-discuss-partnership-regional-peace>

- **King condoles Saudi Monarch over death of Prince Saad**

His Majesty King Abdullah II, Tuesday, sent a cable to Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman Bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, condoling him over the passing away of Prince Saad bin Faisal bin Abdulaziz Al Saud.

More details on:

http://www.petra.gov.jo/Public_News/Nws_NewsDetails.aspx?lang=2&site_id=1&NewsID=297363&CatID=13

- **Jordan sees 22 percent rise in labor protests in 2016: Report**

Labour protests increased by 22 per cent last year, a rise which reflects the gravity of Jordan's socioeconomic crisis, a new report suggests.

More details:

<http://www.albawaba.com/business/jordan-sees-22-percent-rise-labor-protests-2016-961510>

- **Jordan hosts meeting for counter-Daesh Global Coalition's working group on stabilization**

Jordan Monday co-hosted in coordination with the UAE and Germany the seventh meeting for the working group on stabilization affiliated with the Global Coalition against Daesh.

More details on:

<http://en.ammonnews.net/article.aspx?articleNO=34766&title=Jordan%20hosts%20meeting%20for%20counter-Daesh%20Global%20Coalition#.WO3kUdSLRko>

- **Tillerson draws line in the sand over Russia's support of Assad regime**

Foreign ministers from Jordan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Turkey and the United Arab Emirates joined their counterparts from the G-7 countries to address the conflict in Syria days after the U.S. responded to the chemical attack with a cruise missile strike on a Syrian government air base.

More details:

<http://abcnews.go.com/International/tillerson-assads-reign-syria-coming-end/story?id=46723724>

6. ARABIAN PENINSULA AND THE GULF OF BASRA

- **Qatar and Kenya sign pacts to boost bilateral relations**

Qatar and Kenya signed a number of agreements and memoranda of understanding following a round of official talks chaired by HH the Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani and Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta, in Nairobi yesterday. At the outset of the session, the Kenyan president welcomed HH the Emir and the accompanying delegation and thanked him for accepting the invitation to visit Kenya, stressing that the visit of the Emir is a significant step in developing historic ties between the two countries on all fronts, particularly in investment and agriculture, and adding that his recent visit to Doha and the visit of the Emir to Kenya constitute a strong basis for boosting bilateral ties.

More details:

<http://www.gulf-times.com/story/544125/Qatar-and-Kenya-sign-pacts-to-boost-bilateral-rela>

- **South Africa Said to Move Qatar Visit to Avoid Shaming Zuma**

South Africa brought forward a meeting between President Jacob Zuma and Qatar's emir, Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Bin Al Thani, to avoid embarrassing Zuma as opposition parties prepare to march to his offices in Pretoria to demand he step down, according to a person familiar with the matter. The meeting was rescheduled to take place Tuesday night rather than Wednesday, the person said,

asking not to be identified because the matter is private. The change was reported on the website of Johannesburg-based weekly newspaper Mail & Guardian. Zuma visited Qatar in May last year.

More details:

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2017-04-11/south-africa-said-to-move-qatar-visit-to-avoid-embarrassing-zuma>

- **Tax and transparency needed to keep Qatar buoyant, says IMF**

More taxes, better monitoring and more transparent spending will be needed in Qatar to offset the impact of a price slump on the country's commodity-reliant economy, according to the International Monetary Fund.

More details:

<http://www.publicfinanceinternational.org/news/2017/04/tax-and-transparency-needed-keep-qatar-buoyant-says-imf>

- **5 Sudanese soldiers killed in Yemen conflict: Army spokesperson**

Five Sudanese soldiers have been killed while fighting for the Saudi Arabia-led coalition against Houthi forces in Yemen, a spokesperson for Sudan's armed forces said, on Wednesday.

More details:

<http://sunnewsonline.com/5-sudanese-soldiers-killed-in-yemen-conflict-army-spokesperson/>

- **Risk of Mass Starvation Rising Rapidly in Africa, Yemen**

The risk of mass starvation in four countries — northeast Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan and Yemen — is rising rapidly due to drought and conflict, the U.N. refugee agency said on Tuesday.

More details:

<http://www.telesurtv.net/english/news/Risk-of-Mass-Starvation-Rising-Rapidly-in-Africa-Yemen-20170411-0041.html>

- **Yemen pro-government forces 'retake areas in Mokha district'**

Yemeni pro-government forces, backed by the Saudi-led Arab coalition, on Tuesday recaptured areas in the north and east of Mokha district from the Houthi rebels, reported the UAE's state news agency, Wam.

More details:

<http://www.thenational.ae/world/middle-east/yemen-pro-government-forces-retake-areas-in-mokha-district>

- **Rights Group: Iran, Saudi Arabia, Iraq among Top Global Executioners**

The Times of Israel reports: Iran, Saudi Arabia and Iraq were among the top five executioners in the world in 2016, according to a new report by Amnesty International. China still outpaces the rest of the world combined, but Iran comes in at number two, followed by Saudi Arabia, Iraq and Pakistan, with the latter four accounting for 87 percent of the executions that took place in 2016.

More details:

<http://www.breitbart.com/jerusalem/2017/04/12/rights-group-iran-saudi-arabia-iraq-among-top-global-executioners/>

- **Philippines-Saudi Arabia sign deals**

President Rodrigo Duterte and Saudi Arabian King Salman bin Abdulaziz al-Daud on Tuesday witnessed the ceremonial signing of some agreements between the Philippines and Saudi Arabia.

More details:

<http://globalnation.inquirer.net/154738/philippines-saudi-arabia-sign-deals#ixzz4e1VbN4rX>

- **First woman on trial in Saudi Arabia over Shiite protests**

The trial has begun in Saudi Arabia of the first women accused of involvement in protests in a Shiite-majority area of the kingdom, a newspaper reported on Tuesday. The Okaz daily did not name the accused, but gave her age as 43.

More details:

<http://www.arabianbusiness.com/first-woman-on-trial-in-saudi-arabia-over-shiite-protests-670611.html>

- **Oil prices in biggest rally since December as Saudi Arabia seen backing curbs**

Oil is riding the longest winning streak since December on optimism Saudi Arabia will support an extension to Organisation of petroleum exporting countries-led output cuts just as US stockpiles show signs of shrinking.

More details:

<http://www.livemint.com/Money/nfsZdg0Sq9lzaAs2VAGGvO/Oil-prices-in-biggest-rally-since-December-as-Saudi-Arabia-s.html>

7. EGYPT

- **Egypt Arrest Dozens after Deadly ISIS Palm Sunday Terror**

Addressing concerns about abuse of freedoms, Sissi spokesperson says Egypt has been in state of emergency for 30 years, so Egyptian people would have to be prepared to take steps to fight terrorism for three months.

More details:

<http://www.haaretz.com/middle-east-news/egypt/1.782944>

- **Egypt-Nigeria: Defining golden diplomatic relations**

Since Egypt and Nigeria established diplomatic relations in early days of Nigerian independence, the two continental giants have shown example of ‘golden diplomatic ties.’ Since Egypt and Nigeria established diplomatic relations in early days of Nigerian independence, the two continental giants have shown example of ‘golden diplomatic ties.’

More details:

<http://leadership.ng/news/581113/egypt-nigeria-defining-golden-diplomatic-relations>

- **PH condemns Palm Sunday attack on Egypt**

The Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) on Wednesday denounced the bombing of churches in Egypt that has killed at least 44 people last Sunday. “The Philippines strongly condemns the terrorist attacks on April 09, 2017 against the Coptic churches in Tanta and Alexandria in Egypt, coming as they did on Palm Sunday,” the DFA said in a statement.

More details:

<http://globalnation.inquirer.net/154773/ph-condemns-palm-sunday-attack-on-egypt>

- **Petroleum Minister, EU officials meet to boost cooperation in energy projects**

Petroleum Ministry Tareq el-Molla met with Christian Danielsson, Director-General for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations, and Ivan Surkos, Head of the European Delegation in Egypt, to discuss boosting bilateral cooperation and taking advantage of initiatives offered by the EU over the coming period to support energy products in general and the petrol and gas sectors in particular to achieve sustainable development.

More details:

<http://www.egyptindependent.com//news/petroleum-minister-eu-officials-meet-boost-cooperation-energy-projects>

- **Parliament speaker: Terrorist's attack in Egypt meant to create religious rift**

Iranian Parliament Speaker Ali Larijani in a letter to his Egyptian counterpart Ali Abdel Aal condemned the recent terrorist attacks in that country, describing them as efforts to create rifts among followers of different faiths. "The recent terrorist attacks in Egypt were meant to create religious strife," Larijani said in his letter written on Tuesday.

More details:

<http://en.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13960123000375>

- **Cairo takes urgent measures to combat terrorism after church bombings**

In the wake of the Palm Sunday church bombings, Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi and parliament took several steps amending internal laws that confront terrorism, but many doubt the ability of these measures to halt terrorist attacks.

More details:

<http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2017/04/egypt-church-bombings-parliament-sisi-amendments-terrorism.html>

- **Egypt signs €10 million grant agreement with EU for empowerment of women**

Minister of Investment and International Cooperation Sahar Nasr signed a grant agreement with Director General of the European Neighborhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations Christian Danielsson for the promotion of women's rights in Egypt.

More details:

<http://www.egyptindependent.com//news/egypt-signs-%E2%82%AC10-million-grant-agreement-eu-empowerment-women>

- **Why Declaring a State of Emergency in Egypt Will Not Protect Its Coptic Christians**

Fear ripped through Egypt's Coptic Christian community once more, on April 9, 2017, as two deadly bombings targeted churches in Tanta and Alexandria on Palm Sunday. As of this writing, over 100 people have been injured and the death toll has risen to forty-nine, in what The New York Times has called "one of the deadliest day of violence against Christians in Egypt in decades."

More details:

<http://muftah.org/state-emergency-egypt-coptic-church-bombing/#.WO4BR9SLRkg>

8. NORTH AFRICA

- **Post Brexit UK eyes energy investments in Algeria**

Minister of Energy Nouredine Boutarfa has received, Sunday in Algiers, a British delegation led by Lord Mayor of the City of London Andrew Parmley, with whom he examined business and investment opportunities between Algeria and the UK, especially in the field of energy, said the Ministry in a statement.

More details:

<http://www.albawaba.com/business/post-brexit-uk-eyes-energy-investments-algeria-961704>

- **PC's Ahmet Meeting in Cairo**

Egypt has said that no players in Libya should be excluded in the search for political consensus. Foreign minister Sameh Shoukry explained this when he saw Presidency Council deputy-president Ahmed Maetig today in Cairo.

More details:

<https://www.libyaherald.com/2017/04/11/pcs-ahmed-maetig-in-cairo/>

- **Airstrike on Libyan base**

Forces aligned with a UN-backed government in Tripoli said on Monday that three of their men had been killed in air raids against a desert air base by rivals allied with eastern-based commander Khalifa Haftar.

More details:

<http://www.fijitimes.com/story.aspx?id=396390>

- **Development and social justice, main topics of campaign's day three**

The economic development through major industrial and agricultural investments and the social justice have been the main topics addressed by the political party leaders on Tuesday, the third day of the campaign of 4 May legislative elections.

More details:

<http://en.aps.dz/algeria/17733-development-and-social-justice,-main-topics-of-campaign%E2%80%99s-day-three>

- **Fierce Clashes Pit LNA, GNA Forces Eyeing Sabha Airbase, Libya**

Armed militiamen attacked the house of Al-Seddiq Al-Kabeer, Governor of the Central Bank of Libya (CBL) in Tripoli. On the other hand, fierce clashes erupted between the Libyan National Army under the command of General Khalifa Haftar and the internationally-backed Government of National Accord headed by Libya Prime Minister Fayez al-Sarraj.

More details:

<http://english.aawsat.com/khalid-mahmoud/news-middle-east/fierce-clashes-pit-lna-gna-forces-eyeing-sabha-airbase-libya>

- **UN concerned about human rights violations in occupied Western Sahara**

In 2016, Morocco has prevented UN human rights monitoring missions from visiting occupied territories in Western Sahara, said the UN Tuesday, expressing concern about torture and degrading inhuman treatment inflicted to the Sahrawi people.

More details:

<http://en.aps.dz/world/17734-un-concerned-about-human-rights-violations-in-occupied-western-sahara>

- **Haftar receives more support in his visit to UAE**

The commander of the eastern forces of Operation Dignity under the Tobruk-based House of Representatives (HoR) Khalifa Haftar visited the United Arab Emirates on Monday and met with the Abu Dhabi's Crown Prince, Mohammed Ben Zayed Al Nahyan.

More details:

<http://www.libyanexpress.com/haftar-receives-more-support-in-his-visit-to-uae/>

9. AFGHANISTAN – PAKISTAN

- **Nangarhar offensive: 49 Daesh Rebels Dead in airstrikes**

Forty-nine Daesh rebels have been killed during clearing operation codenamed Hamza in the Achin district of eastern Nangarhar province, an official said on Wednesday.

More details:

<http://www.pajhwok.com/en/2017/04/12/nangarhar-offensive-49-daesh-rebels-dead-airstrikes>

- **Kandahar Intelligence arrest 6 involved in major terrorist attacks**

A group of six militants involved in major terrorist attacks were arrested by the provincial intelligence directorate operatives in Kandahar. The National Directorate of Security (NDS) in Kandahar said the militants were arrested during a special military operation after their links with the terrorists were confirmed.

More details:

<http://www.khaama.com/kandahar-intelligence-arrest-6-involved-in-major-terrorist-attacks-02549>

- **Two Soldiers Killed in Zabul Blast**

The blast took place in Shenkai district of the province on Tuesday after an ANA vehicle struck an IED, officials said. At least two Afghan National Army (ANA) soldiers were killed in a blast in southern Zabul province, officials from 205 Atal Military Corp said on Wednesday.

More details:

<http://www.tolonews.com/afghanistan/two-soldiers-killed-zabul-blast>

- **Building Walls, fences won't cross-border, says Afghan envoy**

Expressing strong opposition to the fencing of the Durand Line, Ambassador Dr Hazrat Omar Zakhilwal said here on Tuesday that it would be better for Pakistan and Afghanistan to solve the issue through dialogue instead.

More details:

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1326404/building-walls-fences-wont-end-cross-border-terrorism-says-afghan-envoy>

- **Uzair Baloch taken into military custody on charges of espionage: ISPR**

Pakistan Army has taken Uzair Baloch, former Lyari gangster and chief of the proscribed People's Amn Committee (PAC), into custody on charges of espionage, Inter Services Public Relations said late Tuesday.

More details:

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/latest/197940-Uzair-Baloch-taken-into-military-custody-on-charges-of-espionage-ISPR>

- **PM makes peace overtures to neighbours**

Amid the prevailing tensions following the disappearance of a former Pakistani military officer in Nepal and the subsequent death sentence awarded to Indian spy Kulbushan Jadhav, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif on Tuesday appeared to strike a reconciliatory tone on relations with neighbouring countries, including India.

More details:

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1326396/pm-makes-peace-overtures-to-neighbours>

- **7 Taliban leaders killed in Northern provinces**

A number of the Taliban leaders and other militants suffered casualties during the ongoing Khalid security operations in Northern parts of Afghanistan, local reports said. The 209th Shaheen Corps of the Afghan National Army (ANA) forces in the North said the militants suffered casualties in Sar-e-Pul and Faryab provinces in the past 24 hours.

More details:

<http://thekabultimes.gov.af/index.php/newsnational/13641-7-taliban-leaders-killed-in-northern-provinces.html>

- **Rabbani annoyed at incomplete information**

Senate Chairman Mian Raza Rabbani on Tuesday protested again in the Senate over not sharing complete information with the House regarding details of pension and other benefits admissible to officers of the rank of major general and above of the armed forces, asking if parliament was a charity house.

More details:

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/198047-Rabbani-annoyed-at-incomplete-information>

- **Rangers foil massive terror bid in Karachi**

A major terrorism bid was foiled in the provincial capital of Sindh as paramilitary forces apprehended five hardcore terrorists from the outskirts of the city, nformed Rangers spokesperson Colonel Qaisar.

More details:

<https://www.geo.tv/latest/137756-Rangers-foil-massive-terror-bid-in-Karachi>

- **Plot Attacks of Taliban on Helmand failed**

Lashkarga (BNA) plot of Taliban for organizing of terrorist attacks was failed. Assailants before organizing terrorist attacks were targeted by security forces in their strongholds in Sangeen district.

More details:

<http://www.bakhtarnews.com.af/eng/security/item/28255-plot-attacks-of-taliban-on-helmand-failed.html>

- **Kabul to send 'clear message' to Taliban at Moscow Talks**

Afghanistan expected to push participating countries to deliberate the issue of terrorists' safe havens at the upcoming meeting in Russia. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) on Tuesday said Kabul is committed to sending a 'clear message' to the Taliban during the upcoming conference on Afghanistan in Moscow.

More details:

<http://www.tolonews.com/afghanistan/kabul-send-%E2%80%98clear-message%E2%80%99-taliban-moscow-talks>

10. TURKEY AND THE MIDDLE EAST

- **Turkey plans to recruit doctors, nurses from Gulf**

Turkish hospitals will soon recruit doctors and nurses from the Gulf countries, Health Ministry Undersecretary Eyup Gumus announced on Wednesday. "Doctors and nurses from the Gulf states will be allowed to work here [at city hospitals]," Gumus told the fourth joint meeting of the Gulf Cooperation Council-Turkey Health Working Group in Ankara.

More Details:

<http://www.worldbulletin.net/turkey/187810/turkey-plans-to-recruit-doctors-nurses-from-gulf>

- **Turkey calls for use of force to halt Syria atrocities**

A government minister on Wednesday called for military force to be used against Bashar al-Assad's regime to prevent atrocities against civilians. EU Affairs Minister Omer Celik said Assad manipulated efforts to resolve the six-year conflict in Syria while carrying out attacks on civilians.

More Details:

<http://aa.com.tr/en/middle-east/turkey-calls-for-use-of-force-to-halt-syria-atrocities/795110>

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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