



# MIDDLE EAST DAILY BULLETIN

## GÜNLÜK ORTADOĐU BÜLTENİ

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## 1. IRAQ

- **Parliament approves appointments of Hayali and Araji as new defense, interior ministers**

The Iraqi Parliament approved on Monday the appointment of new defense and interior ministers, filling the positions that have been vacant since 2015. The parliament, in the presence of more than 220 members, approved the appointment of Erfan al-Hayyali as defense minister. He was the training and operations director at the army's elite Counter-Terrorism Force. The assembly also voted for Qassem al-Aaraji, a member of the parliament's security and defense committee, as interior minister. The process of selecting nominees for vacant government ministries ran amid intense political disputes over the past year, with various political players vying for a share in the cabinet and claiming right to them.

More Details:

<http://www.iraqinews.com/baghdad-politics/parliament-approves-appointments-of-hayali-and-araji-as-new-defense-interior-ministry/>

- **Parliament Rejects Voting on Ministers of Trade and industry**

The House of Representatives, headed by Salim al-Jubouri and in the presence of 199 MPs rejected to vote on candidates for the ministries of trade and industry.

More Details:

[http://www.ninanews.com/News\\_Details.aspx?7lhO0g1h1O1CfINjpzvMHg%253d%253d](http://www.ninanews.com/News_Details.aspx?7lhO0g1h1O1CfINjpzvMHg%253d%253d)

- **Iraqi Air Force Drops Millions of Leaflets over West Mosul**

The Iraqi war planes have dropped millions of leaflets over the western part of Mosul asking the residents to be prepared for the imminent operation of the Iraqi forces against the Islamic State (IS). Iraqi War Media Cell reported that the Iraqi jets have dropped millions of leaflets on West Mosul warning the people to keep away from the IS positions and cooperate with the Iraqi forces in their offensive to liberate the entire city from the militants.

More Details:

<http://www.basnews.com/index.php/en/news/iraq/327372>

- **Iraqi MPs call for US entry ban as translators condemn 'betrayal'**

Iraq's parliament has recommended a ban on Americans entering the country in response to Donald Trump's move to suspend US visas for its citizens, as would-be refugees pleaded for Trump's decision

to be overturned. The recommendation does not appear to be binding on the Iraqi government, which is allied with Washington in the fight against Islamic State. However, it inflames a strong anti-US sentiment already present in Iraq, creating uncertainty for US aid workers, contractors and journalists who regularly travel there.

More Details:

[http://www.shafaaq.com/en/En\\_NewsReader/aedaf8b3-3d91-4bc1-a0af-beefc07580c6/-Iraqi-MPs-call-for-US-entry-ban-as-translators-condemn--betrayal--](http://www.shafaaq.com/en/En_NewsReader/aedaf8b3-3d91-4bc1-a0af-beefc07580c6/-Iraqi-MPs-call-for-US-entry-ban-as-translators-condemn--betrayal--)

- **Egyptian delegation to visit Iraq, over Oil importing talks**

The Minister of Petroleum to Egypt, Tarik al-Molla said in a statement on Tuesday, 31 of Jan. that a delegation shall visit Iraq in February for a final draft regarding importing oil. In December, Egypt's Petroleum Minister Tarek El-Molla announced that Egypt was seeking to reach an agreement with Iraq over importing crude oil directly and that he hoped to finalize the deal in the first quarter of 2017.

More Details:

[http://www.pukmedia.com/EN/EN\\_Direje.aspx?Jimare=39610](http://www.pukmedia.com/EN/EN_Direje.aspx?Jimare=39610)

- **Trump's travel ban threatens US partnership with Iraq against Islamic State**

A backlash against President Donald Trump's new immigration rules intensified Monday, threatening Washington's relationship with its main partner in battling the Islamic State as Iraq's parliament voted for a reciprocal ban on visas for Americans. The Iraqi lawmakers' decision is subject to ratification by the government, but it underscores growing resentment over a U.S. executive order that imposed visa restrictions on Iraqis and the citizens of six other Muslim-majority nations.

More Details:

<https://www.stripes.com/news/middle-east/trump-s-travel-ban-threatens-us-partnership-with-iraq-against-islamic-state-1.451742>

- **Donald Trump Thinks He Is Helping Christians. But He Is Making Things Worse, Warns Top Iraq Patriarch**

President Donald Trump's intention to discriminate in favour of Christian refugees will do more harm than good to Christians in the Middle East, a leading Christian patriarch is warning. The president should instead follow the example of Pope Francis and welcome Christian and Muslim refugees without distinction, he added. Archbishop Louis Sako of Iraq, who is the Chaldean Catholic Patriarch of Babylon, said that Trump's "fast track" option for Christian refugees to enter the US while

slamming the doors against refugees from seven countries with a Muslim majority is "a trap for Christians in the Middle East".

More Details:

<http://www.christiantoday.com/article/donald.trump.thinks.he.is.helping.christians.but.he.is.making.things.worse.warns.top.iraq.patriarch/104283.htm>

- **Iraq Yazidi lawmaker could be barred from US award ceremony**

An Iraqi lawmaker who has campaigned prominently for fellow Yazidi women enslaved by the Islamic State group said Tuesday that new US travel restrictions may prevent her from accepting a human rights award. Vian Dakhil had been due to travel to Washington to receive the Lantos Human Rights Prize next week for her work highlighting the plight of Yazidi women turned into sex slaves by the jihadists after their homes were overrun in 2014.

More Details:

<http://www.digitaljournal.com/news/world/iraq-yazidi-lawmaker-could-be-barred-from-us-award-ceremony/article/484837>

- **US Helicopter Lands in ISIL-Held Regions in Iraq**

A member of the Iraqi Parliament disclosed that US army cargo aircraft once again landed in ISIL-held regions near Salahuddin. Sattar al-Qanem quoted sources in the Iraqi army intelligence and the country's popular forces of Hashd al-Sha'abi as saying that an American Chinook helicopter on Saturday landed in al-Jazeera region near Salahuddin that is controlled by the ISIL terrorists.

More Details:

<http://en.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13951112000541>

- **Iraq church leader sees 'no future' for Christians in Mosul**

An Iraqi church leader has said that Christians are unlikely to return to the city of Mosul, a place once home to tens of thousands of believers. After visiting the recently liberated city last week, Fr Emanuel Youkhana of the Assyrian Church of the East told Catholic News Service: "I don't see a future for Christians in Mosul."

More Details:

<http://www.premierchristianradio.com/News/World/Iraq-church-leader-sees-no-future-for-Christians-in-Mosul>

- **Iraq welcomes return of foreign archaeological missions**

Under a new contract between the General Authority of Iraqi Antiquities and Britain, a British exploration mission to the historic Tell Khaiber site west of Nasiriyah arrived Jan. 16. Iraqis are hoping that excavations will resume at about 17,000 sites, 1,200 of which are found in the province of Dhi Qar in the south, mostly dating back to the era of the dawn of dynasties (2800 B.C.), the Sumerian, Akkadian, Babylonian civilizations, and the Islamic era.

More Details:

<http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2017/01/iraq-nasiriyah-khyber-british-exploration-mission.html>

- **Russia ready to help Iraq fight Daesh: Lavrov**

Russia has expressed readiness to provide the Iraqi government with assistance in the country's fight against the Daesh Takfiri terrorist group. Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov made the announcement on Monday, saying that Moscow would help Iraq's anti-terror fight only "with Baghdad's consent."

More Details:

<http://www.presstv.com/Detail/2017/01/30/508449/Russia-Lavrov-Iraq-Daesh-Takfiris-Syria>

- **Defence minister downplays threat to troops in Iraq from Trump immigration order**

Defence Minister Harjit Sajjan has expressed confidence about Canada's mission in Iraq, even as U.S. officials and others warn that the fight against the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant could be undermined by President Donald Trump's recent immigration ban. "Great progress is being made and there's no concern for the security of our troops," Sajjan told reporters on Monday. "It is a dangerous place, obviously, because we are fighting (ISIL). But nonetheless really good progress is being made."

More Details:

<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/feeds/canadian-press/national/defence-minister-downplays-threat-to-troops-in-iraq-from-trump-immigration-order/article33832470/>

- **PMF Accused of Carrying Out Kidnappings in Baghdad**

Iraqi Forces Coalition, largest Sunni bloc in Iraq's Parliament, accused Sunday factions affiliated with the Popular Mobilization Forces of kidnappings and raids in Baghdad. The bloc held Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces Dr. Haider al-Abadi and other security officials accountable to maintaining security and protecting civilians in areas of violations.

More Details:

<http://english.aawsat.com/2017/01/article55366593/pmf-accused-carrying-kidnappings-baghdad>

- **Shiite cleric says Americans should have to leave Iraq: “You should get your nationals out”**

Moqtada al-Sadr, an influential Iraqi cleric, has denounced President Donald Trump’s travel ban by arguing that if Americans are going to ban Iraqis, Iraq should force all American nationals out of their own country. “It would be arrogance for you to enter freely Iraq and other countries while barring to them the entrance to your country,” al-Sadr wrote on his website on Sunday, according to Reuters. “And therefore you should get your nationals out.”

More Details:

<http://www.salon.com/2017/01/30/shiite-cleric-says-americans-should-have-to-leave-iraq-you-should-get-your-nationals-out/>

- **Iraqi general who works with American military kept from visiting U.S.**

Gen. Talib al Kenani commands the elite American-trained counter terrorist forces that have been leading the fight against ISIS for two years. “I’m a four star general, and I’m banned from entering the U.S.?” he said. His family was relocated to the U.S. for their safety, and he’d had plans to see them next week, until he was told not to bother.

More Details:

<http://www.cbsnews.com/news/iraqi-general-who-works-with-american-military-kept-from-visiting-u-s/>

- **The children of Mosul go back to school as Isil is pushed out of Iraq's second city**

On a bright but chilly winter’s morning, the students of the Al Kufa boys' school sat tightly packed in their unlit classroom. Seventy-five boys between the age of six to eight were crammed into the room, four to a bench, wearing jackets and woollen hats to protect them from the cold.

More Details:

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2017/01/30/children-mosul-go-back-school-isil-pushed-iraqs-second-city/>

- **FM: No Iraqi charged with terrorism in US, but there are American ISIS militants**

Iraqi foreign minister Ibrahim al-Jaafari has told the American ambassador to Iraq that his country was surprised by the US decision to ban Iraqi citizens from travelling to the United States, noting that

while no Iraqis have been charged with terrorism in America, there were American citizens fighting for ISIS in Iraq.

More Details:

<http://www.rudaw.net/english/middleeast/iraq/310120171>

- **Kurdistan PM: Baghdad Treats Kurdistan Region as a District**

Kurdistan Regional Government Prime Minister Nechirvan Barzani accused the federal government in Baghdad of not committing to any of its constitutional obligations towards the region. Speaking to Voice of America (VOA), Barzani said that Kurds expect a lot from the U.S. and the principles Washington is seeking are present in Kurdistan. He added that the Kurdish society includes all Iraqi components and sects living together in peace and without any problems.

More Details:

<http://english.aawsat.com/2017/01/article55366587/kurdistan-pm-baghdad-treats-kurdistan-region-district>

## 2. SYRIA

- **Syrian Foreign Minister calls on refugees to return to Syria**

Foreign Minister of the Syrian regime Walid Muallem is calling on Syrian refugees who fled the carnage of the country's civil war to come back to Syria.

More Details:

<http://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx/224147>

- **Damascus Countryside Governor inspects maintenance work in Wadi Barada**

Damascus Countryside Governor Ala'a Ibrhaim inspected on Monday maintenance work being performed on the water lines of Wadi Barada and Ayn Haroush in Wadi Barada area in Damascus Countryside.

More Details:

<http://sana.sy/en/?p=99242>

- **Russian Tu-22M3 bombers destroy command sites and ammunition depots for ISIS in Deir Ezzor**

Russian Defense Ministry announced on Monday that Russian Air Force bombed new sites for ISIS terrorist organization in Deir Ezzor Syrian province as in the framework of its participation to the war on terrorism at a request of the Syrian government.

More Details:

<http://sana.sy/en/?p=99250>

- **Syrian government denies rumours about Assad's health**

The Syrian government has denied claims that President Bashar al-Assad has had a stroke. Assad's office stressed that "the President is in excellent health". This comes after several media outlets have been speculating about Assad's health.

More Details:

<http://aranews.net/2017/01/syrian-state-media-denies-rumours-about-assads-health/>

- **Syrian city liberated from ISIS expands council to better represent community**

The Manbij Civilian Council in Syria's northern city of Manbij, which was liberated from ISIS last August, has expanded in order to better represent the ethnic and tribal communities in the city.

More Details:

<http://aranews.net/2017/01/syrian-city-liberated-from-isis-expands-council-to-better-represent-community/>

- **Government sparing no effort to meet requirements of steadfast Syrian citizens**

The government is sparing no effort to meet the requirements of the steadfast Syrian citizens to help them withstand the ongoing crisis caused by the heinous terrorist war imposed on Syria, Prime Minister Imad Khamis has stressed, noting that a strategic plan was drawn up for this purpose.

More Details:

<http://www.syriatimes.sy/index.php/economy/28907-government-sparing-no-effort-to-meet-the-requirements-of-the-steadfast-syrian-citizens>

- **Syria warns against safe zones set up without its consent**

Syria said on Monday that any attempt to create so-called safe zones for refugees without coordinating with Damascus would be "unsafe" and violate Syria's sovereignty, the state news agency SANA reported.

More Details:

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-usa-idUSKBN15E1SL>

- **Why are Islamist armed groups clashing in Syria?**

The fresh clashes in Syria's Idlib region between a dozen important Islamist and extremist rebel movements are battles for turf and authority on the ground - but they also mirror northern Syria's ever-changing complexities, as local, regional and international actors change policies and tactics.

More Details:

<http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2017/01/islamist-armed-groups-clashing-syria-170129093229422.html>

- **Russia's draft-constitution for Syria receives fare criticism**

The Syrian draft constitution put forward by Russia is seen by many analysts as a reminder of the Paul Bremer constitution for Iraq following the 2003 invasion by the United States. Russian circulated a draft resolution to the Syrian delegations who were attending the Russia-Turkey sponsored negotiations in Astana, Kazakhstan, last week.

More Details:

<http://english.cctv.com/2017/01/29/ARTIpSm15f0QegV9auztY2ob170129.shtml>

- **Syrian forces make further gains across the country**

Syrian government forces have killed a large number of terrorists during their operations to purge the country's western province of Homs and the eastern city of Dayr al-Zawr from Daesh. According to Syria's official news agency, SANA, the areas of Boyout Jarbou al-Izzo and Abu Tawala, located in the T4 region in Homs, were liberated following heavy clashes with the terrorists on Monday.

More Details:

<http://www.presstv.com/Detail/2017/01/30/508464/syria-daesh-gains-homs-russian-airforce>

### 3. IRAN

- **French FM arrives in Iran for key political, economic talks**

French Foreign Minister Jean-Marc Ayrault has arrived in Tehran to hold talks with senior Iranian officials on important economic and political issues.

More Details:

<http://www.presstv.com/Detail/2017/01/30/508446/Iran-France-JeanMarc-Ayrault-Hassan-Rouhani-Mohammad-Javad-Zarif-Ali-Shamkhani-Ali-Larijani>

- **Producers satisfied with crude prices at \$55-60**

Iranian oil minister, while noting that producers were satisfied with 55 to 60 dollars per barrel as oil prices, estimated that the figure will be stabilized at around \$55 in 2017.

More Details:

<http://en.mehrnews.com/news/123134/Producers-satisfied-with-crude-prices-at-55-60>

- **Bosnian parliament backs stronger ties with Tehran**

In a meeting with Iran's Ambassador to Sarajevo Mahmoud Heidari, Jafarovich said Bosnian Parliament favors further development of relations with Iran, hoping that in addition to political ties, commercial and economic relations would further improve.

More Details:

<http://www.irna.ir/en/News/82408908/>

- **Iranian Gov't OKs \$3.7b for Debt Clearance of Banks**

As part of a new presidential directive approved by the Cabinet, the Planning and Budget Organization of Iran has been permitted to clear a portion of the government's debts to the banking system.

More Details:

<https://financialtribune.com/articles/economy-business-and-markets/58580/iranian-govt-oks-37b-for-debt-clearance-of-banks>

- **Lavrov: Iran-Russia Relations on Right Track**

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov voiced his country's satisfaction with the ongoing trend of mutual cooperation between Tehran and Moscow.

More Details:

<http://en.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13951111001659>

- **Iran Reserves Right for Reciprocal Action, Official Says after US Travel Ban**

Spokesman for the Iranian Administration Mohammad Baqer Nobakht said it is the right of the Iranian nation and government to take reciprocal measures against US President Donald Trump's recent order to bar citizens of seven countries, including Iran, from entering the US.

More Details:

<https://www.tasnimnews.com/en/news/2017/01/31/1313636/iran-reserves-right-for-reciprocal-action-official-says-after-us-travel-ban>

- **Pakistani Minister: Iran's Chabahar Not Gwadar's Rival**

Pakistan Minister for Ports and Shipping Mir Hasil Khan Bizenjo underlined that Iran's Chabahar will in no way impede the trade activities of its counterpart in Pakistan, Gwadar.

More Details:

<http://en.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13951111001374>

- **Gender Equality Key to National Security: Iranian Activist**

Iranian women rights activist hailed a recent bill passed by the Parliament to ensure gender equality in the country, and highlighted the key role such equality plays in national security.

More Details:

<http://ifpnews.com/interviews/2017/01/gender-equality-key-to-national-security-iranian-activist/>

- **Trump's travel ban on Muslims illegal, inhumane: Iran first VP**

Iran's first vice president says US President Donald Trump's executive order to ban entry into the country from the Islamic Republic and six other Muslim states is "illegal, inhumane and in violation of human rights", adding Tehran will take reciprocal measures.

More Details:

<http://www.presstv.com/Detail/2017/01/30/508410/Iran-US-Eshaq-Jahangiri-Donald-Trump-visa-ban>

- **Iran promises not to use ballistic missiles as weapons**

Iran said today that ballistic missile tests carried out by the country on Sunday were neither part of a nuclear agreement with world powers, or a UN Security Council resolution endorsing the deal, something which Security Council members reject. Neither confirming nor denying US accusations that Iran had carried out a missile test on Sunday, Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said Iran would never use missiles “produced in Iran” to attack another country.

More Details:

<https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20170131-iran-promises-not-to-use-ballistic-missiles-as-weapons/>

## 4. ISRAEL – PALESTINE

- **Left Warns against ‘De Facto Annexation’ in Knesset Vote**

Approval of the so-called “settlement regulation bill” is tantamount to de facto annexation, opposition and Zionist Union Party head MK Isaac Herzog warned on Monday afternoon. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu told his faction meeting, “We plan to advance the legislation this week. Its objective is to prevent [legal] deficiencies and attempts to harass settlements in Judea and Samaria.”

More details:

<http://www.jpost.com/Israel-News/Politics-And-Diplomacy/Left-warns-against-de-facto-annexation-in-Knesset-vote-480069>

- **Netanyahu to meet Trump in Washington on Feb. 15**

President Donald Trump will host Israeli Premier Benjamin Netanyahu on Feb. 15, the White House said Monday. Announcing Netanyahu's upcoming visit, White House spokesman Sean Spicer said the relationship between Tel Aviv and Washington was "crucial to the security of both our nations".

More details:

<http://aa.com.tr/en/americas/netanyahu-to-meet-trump-in-washington-on-feb-15/738137>

- **Israelis May Be Impacted by Trump's Anti-Muslim Decree**

Mizrahim (Israelis born in Muslim countries), constituting approximately half of Israel's population, could find themselves impacted by President Donald Trump's decree banning people from several Muslim nations from entering the USA. The countries are Yemen, Syria, Iraq, Libya, Iran, Somalia and Afghanistan.

More Details:

<https://www.breakingisraelnews.com/82809/israelis-may-impacted-trumps-anti-muslim-decree/#ggQtLTwAmT0xDg7Z.99>

- **Israel's Netanyahu says he will push Trump on Iran sanctions**

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said on Monday he planned to push U.S. President Donald Trump to renew sanctions against Iran during a visit to Washington next month, complaining that Iran had once more tested a ballistic missile

More details:

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-trump-israel-iran-idUSKBN15E2GP>

- **OIC condemns Israeli settlements and calls for implementing Security Council Resolution No.2334**

The Organisation of Islamic Cooperation, OIC, has strongly condemned the ratification by the Israeli government of the construction of thousands of new settlement units in the occupied Palestinian territories, including Al-Quds city.

More details:

<http://www.wam.ae/en/news/arab-international/1395306681794.html>

- **Knesset to vote on bill that green lights settler homes**

Israel's parliament is to vote on a controversial bill that seeks to retroactively legalise 4,000 settler homes built on privately owned Palestinian land in the occupied West Bank, a measure the attorney general has said is unconstitutional. The bill has already passed the first reading in the Knesset, and will be heard two more times on Monday.

More details:

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/01/knesset-west-bank-settlements-170130092730832.html>

- **2 Palestinians Die 'of Natural Causes' at Gaza-Egypt Border Crossing**

Two travelers died “of natural causes” at the Rafah crossing on Sunday, on the second of a three-day opening of the border crossing between Egypt and the Gaza Strip, the Palestinian border committee said in a statement.

More details:

<http://www.palestinechronicle.com/2-palestinians-die-of-natural-causes-at-gaza-egypt-border-crossing/>

- **Palestinian President Abbas begins visit to Pakistan**

Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, who has started his three-day visit to Pakistan, will inaugurate the newly constructed Palestine Embassy Complex in Islamabad on Tuesday, officials said.

More details:

[http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-01/31/c\\_136022693.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-01/31/c_136022693.htm)

- **Palestinian Authority urges quick ICC ruling on settlements**

The Palestinian Authority has urged the International Criminal Court (ICC) to speed up rulings on key issues including Israeli settlements, an official has told Arab News

More details:

<http://www.arabnews.com/node/1046966/middle-east>

- **Israeli, Mexican presidents to meet over tweet**

After PM Netanyahu's tweet supporting a border wall between Mexico, US inflames Israel-Mexico tensions, Israeli President Rivlin to speak with Mexican President Peña Nieto to try and smooth things over

More details:

<http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-4915465,00.html>

## 5. JORDAN and LEBANON

- **Iran, Lebanon, Algeria condemn mosque shooting in Quebec**

Iran, Lebanon and Algeria condemned on Monday a deadly shooting attack at a mosque in the city of Quebec in Canada late Sunday.

More details:

[http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-01/31/c\\_136021858.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-01/31/c_136021858.htm)

- **Jordan's King Abdullah Wants Trump to Get Tougher on Terrorism**

Jordan's King Abdullah is in Washington this week to meet with high-ranking members of the new administration, including a meeting with President Trump scheduled for Thursday.

More details:

<http://www.breitbart.com/national-security/2017/01/30/jordans-king-abdullah-wants-trump-get-tougher-terrorism/>

- **King meets U.S. ministers of Defense, Homeland Security**

His Majesty King Abdullah II, on Monday, held separate meetings in Washington, DC, with U.S. Secretary of Defense, James Mattis, and U.S. Secretary of Homeland Security, John Kelly, during which they discussed the strategic relations between the two countries and ways of promoting them in various fields.

More details:

[http://www.petra.gov.jo/Public\\_News/Nws\\_NewsDetails.aspx?lang=2&site\\_id=1&NewsID=287290&CatID=13](http://www.petra.gov.jo/Public_News/Nws_NewsDetails.aspx?lang=2&site_id=1&NewsID=287290&CatID=13)

- **Trump to Meet Jordanian King at National Prayer Breakfast on Thursday**

US President Donald Trump will meet with Jordan's King Abdullah II during a prayer breakfast in Washington, DC on Thursday, White House spokesman Sean Spicer said in his press briefing.

More details:

<https://sputniknews.com/us/201701301050173973-trump-jordanian-king-national-prayer-breakfast/>

- **Saad says quadripartite committee's law 'strife fomented project**

Democratic Gathering Leader, MP Fouad Al-Saad, on Tuesday lashed out on the quadripartite committee's election law proposal, describing it as one that is void of justice, parity, and proper representation among candidates.

More details:

<http://nna-leb.gov.lb/en/show-news/74729/Saad-says-quadripartite-committee-39-law-39-strife-fomented-project-39>

- **Report: Aoun-Hariri Relations Firm in Spite of Election Law Debate**

Relations between President Michel Aoun and Prime Minister Saad Hariri are firm and have not been affected by the ongoing debate over a new election law for the upcoming parliamentary polls, al-Joumhouria daily reported on Tuesday.

More details:

<http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/224651-report-aoun-hariri-relations-firm-in-spite-of-election-law-debate>

- **PSP, Kataeb accuse vote law committee of favoritism**

A four-party committee struggling to agree on a new voting system came under fire Monday by MP Walid Jumblatt's bloc and the Kataeb Party, which accused it of seeking to eliminate other parties with its hybrid proposals, casting doubts about attempts to forge an electoral law ahead of the Feb. 21 deadline for the upcoming parliamentary polls.

More details:

<http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Lebanon-News/2017/Jan-31/391674-ppsp-kataeb-accuse-vote-law-committee-of-favoritism.ashx>

- **Saudi National Campaign Distributes Winter Relief Aid to Syrian Refugees in Lebanon**

Saudi National Campaign to support brothers in Syria continues, through the 60th stage of its relief programs, distributing winter clothes to Syrian refugees living in Lebanon. The relief packages which have been distributed to 1033 Syrian families or by 6198 beneficiaries living in Lebanon included winter clothes, blankets, jackets, sweaters and caps, as well as kitchenware and health bags with hygiene supplies.

More Details:

<http://sites.alriyadh.com/en/article/1155385/Saudi-National-Campaign-Distributes-Winter-Relief-Aid-to-Syrian-Refugees-in-Lebanon>

- **Assad will stay and refugees must go, says Lebanon president**

Lebanon's president has insisted that President Bashar al-Assad of Syria will remain in office, saying he wants Syrian refugees currently in his country to go home. "President Assad will stay, and those who are asking for his departure are ignoring Syria," newly elected Lebanese President Michel Aoun told French TV channel LCI on Monday.

More Details:

<http://www.middleeasteye.net/news/assad-will-stay-says-lebanons-pro-syria-president-1760722461>

## 6. ARABIAN PENINSULA AND THE GULF OF BASRA

- **Trump calls to Arab leaders a positive sign**

Despite the ongoing mass hysteria among Washington's punditry on the potential foreign policy fallout of President Donald Trump's recent executive orders, the recent phone call between him and Saudi King Salman seems to have been warm and substantive. Trump's call with Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al-Nahyan was characterized by both Washington and Abu Dhabi as reinforcing strong bilateral relations.

More Details

<http://www.arabnews.com/node/1046906/columns>

- **Sheikh Mohammed attends Zayed II Military College graduation**

His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President, Prime Minister and Ruler of Dubai, has attended the graduation ceremony of the 41st batch of graduates at the Zayed II Military College in Al Ain.

More Details

<http://www.emirates247.com/news/government/sheikh-mohammed-attends-zayed-ii-military-college-graduation-2017-01-31-1.647323>

- **Dubai, Qatar may be hit by global share jitters**

Jan 31 Stock markets in Dubai and Qatar, which are the Gulf bourses most exposed to foreign fund flows, may be hit on Tuesday by negative sentiment towards global equities due to the travel curbs ordered by U.S. President Donald Trump.

More Details

<http://www.reuters.com/article/mideast-stocks-idUSL5N1FLOGO?rpc=401&>

- **Dual passport holders urged to correct status**

Citizens who have nationalities other than that of Bahrain are requested to contact the passport office at the Security Service Complex in Muharraq to rectify their status before the deadline on February 4 in order to avoid legal action and fine, announced Acting Director of Nationality and Passport Affairs of the Nationality, Passport and Residence Affairs (NPRA), Lieutenant-Col. Bader Rashid Al Binfalal.

More Details

<http://www.newsofbahrain.com/viewNews.php?ppld=30004&TYPE=Posts&pid=21&MNU=2&SUB>

- **Oman bank profits under pressure from slower economy, Islamic finance penetration: Moody's**

The three largest Omani banks - Bank Muscat, BankDhofar and National Bank of Oman (NBO) – are facing dual profitability pressures from slowing economic growth and rapid penetration of Islamic finance, which is intensifying competition for financial products, according to global ratings agency Moody's.

More Details

<http://www.muscatdaily.com/Archive/Business/Oman-bank-profits-under-pressure-from-slower-economy-Islamic-finance-penetration-Moody-s-4xnu>

- **Bahrain: Arrest Powers Restored to Abusive Agency**

Bahrain has restored arrest and investigatory powers to an intelligence agency that conducted “terrorizing” house raids and systematically tortured detainees in 2011, Human Rights Watch said today. The decision to grant Bahrain’s National Security Agency (NSA) the power to arrest and detain people suspected of terrorist offenses reverses one of the few significant security sector reforms introduced after 2011.

More Details

<https://www.hrw.org/news/2017/01/31/bahrain-arrest-powers-restored-abusive-agency>

- **Two Saudi sailors killed in Yemen rebel sea strike: coalition**

Two Saudi sailors were killed during a Yemeni rebel boat attack in the Red Sea, the Saudi-led coalition said on Monday, reporting a rare naval engagement in its nearly two-year war.

More Details

<http://www.9news.com.au/world/2017/01/31/11/14/two-saudis-killed-in-boat-strike-according-to-coalition>

- **Yemen's Houthis attack Saudi ship, launch ballistic missile**

The armed Houthi movement attacked a Saudi warship off the western coast of Yemen on Monday, causing an explosion that killed two crew members and injured three others, Saudi state news agency SPA reported.

More Details

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-yemen-security-saudi-idUSKBN15E2KE>

- **Saudi Arabia condemns Israeli settlements**

The Saudi cabinet on Monday condemned Israeli settlement-building in the occupied West Bank, as the Jewish state prepared to vote on legalising wildcat communities. Approval of the new construction on Palestinian land is “aimed at Judaisation of large parts of East Jerusalem,” the cabinet said, according to the official Saudi Press Agency. It added that the settlements contradict the will of the international community “and prevent the opportunity for peace and stability in the region.”

More Details:

<http://gulftoday.ae/portal/f589e73b-122b-40d6-b43f-90f9e3750a73.aspx>

## 7. EGYPT

- **Egypt, Turkey now have same stance on Syria; both support Al-Assad: Saeed**

Egypt has managed to secure several posts in international and regional institutions in 2016. The most significant ones are its membership in the United Nations (UN) Security Council and its membership in the Peace and Security Council in the African Union.

More Details

<http://www.dailynewsegypt.com/2017/01/31/613484/>

- **Egypt: Turkish businessmen willing to invest in Egypt**

Turkish businessmen are planning to pump new investments in Egypt worth \$5 billion in the coming period, the president of the Turkish-Egyptian Businessmen Association (TÜMİAD) Atilia Ataseven said on Monday.

More Details

<https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20170131-egypt-turkish-businessmen-willing-to-invest-in-egypt/>

- **Congress to Introduce Bill Honoring Late Egyptian President Anwar Sadat**

Orthodox Jew behind initiative for ‘one of the greatest statesman of the 20th century’ who ‘bravely reached out to Israel and dedicated himself to peace’

More Details

<http://www.jpost.com/Middle-East/Congress-to-introduce-bill-honoring-late-Egyptian-president-Anwar-Sadat-480083>

- **Can Hamas' Haniyeh accept Egyptian demands?**

Senior Hamas official Ismail Haniyeh went home to Gaza after a four-and-a-half month sojourn in Qatar. Haniyeh decided to return from Qatar even though the process of his appointment as Hamas leader had not yet been finalized. Hamas' supreme body, the Shura Council, had elected Haniyeh to replace current political bureau chief Khaled Meshaal.

More Details

<http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2017/01/israel-egypt-gaza-strip-palestinians-hamas-jihad-sinai.html>

- **Temporary workers rally outside Agriculture Ministry, demanding full-time contracts and livable monthly wage**

Dozens of workers who have been employed by the Agriculture Ministry to plant and maintain trees in governorates across Egypt gathered outside the ministry's Giza headquarters on Monday to demand the contracted labor and livable wages the government had promised them.

More Details

<http://www.madamasr.com/en/2017/01/30/news/u/%E2%80%8Btemporary-workers-rally-outside-agriculture-ministry-demanding-full-time-contracts-and-livable-monthly-wage/>

- **Sisi wants Regeni killer, Egyptian committee No.2**

Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi wants to find the people who tortured and murdered Italian researcher Giulio Regeni last year, the deputy head of the Egyptian parliament's foreign affairs committee, Tarek El Khouly, said Monday. "I think there is an order from the Egyptian political leaders, from the president in person, to the general prosecutor to discover who killed Regeni, whoever that may be," El Khouly told ANSA. "I think that, in any part of the world, mistakes are made by security apparatus. Perhaps it is a crime concerning an Egyptian security apparatus, perhaps not," said El Khouly, adding that the Regeni case had been politically "exploited" in both Egypt and Italy and urging a "separation" between Italy-Egypt ties and the case.

More Details

[http://www.ansa.it/english/news/2017/01/30/sisi-wants-regeni-killer-egyptian-committee-no.2-3\\_154eca3f-069d-47b4-92fb-043ed38a901b.html](http://www.ansa.it/english/news/2017/01/30/sisi-wants-regeni-killer-egyptian-committee-no.2-3_154eca3f-069d-47b4-92fb-043ed38a901b.html)

- **Saudi Arabia and Egypt are excluded from Trump's ban. Why?**

When President Trump issued executive orders limiting immigration on Friday, it appears there was at least one important omission. He has failed to instruct the National Park Service to put a hood over the Statue of Liberty, the world's most renowned symbol of freedom.

More Details

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2017/jan/30/saudi-arabia-egypt-excluded-from-trumps-ban>

- **Egypt interested in Belarus' agricultural practices**

Egypt shows interest in greenhouse vegetable growing, poultry processing and bakery industries in Belarus, Belarus' Agriculture and Food Minister Leonid Zayats told reporters.

More Details

<http://eng.belta.by/economics/view/egypt-interested-in-belarus-agricultural-practices-98323-2017/>

- **Hamas and Al-Sisi: A new page?**

Spokespersons for the Palestinian Islamic Resistance Movement — Hamas — have given the impression that their movement's relationship with Egypt is on the verge of dramatic shifts that will put an end to the tense relations between the two since the coup that deposed President Mohamed Morsi in 2013.

More Details

<https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20170130-hamas-and-al-sisi-a-new-page/>

## 8. NORTH AFRICA

- **Algeria condemns in strongest terms terrorist attack in Quebec**

Algeria has condemned in "the strongest terms" the despicable terrorist attack on the Islamic Cultural Centre of Quebec in Canada on Sunday evening, said Monday the spokesperson for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Abdelaziz Benali Cherif in a statement to APS.

More details

<http://en.aps.dz/algeria/16462-algeria-condemns-in-strongest-terms-terrorist-attack-in-quebec>

- **The Stakes of Morocco’s Diplomatic Offensive**

The king is in Addis Ababa to further press for Morocco’s return to the African Union. Morocco, which was a founding member of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) — which morphed into the African Union — quit the pan-African bloc after it recognised the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (RASD) in Western Sahara and Algeria backed it for a seat in the African Union.

More details

<http://www.middle-east-online.com/english/?id=81160>

- **Libya wants Maltese authorities to stop smuggling of fuels**

Libya is calling for more collaboration from the Maltese authorities to stop the “smuggling of Libyan fuels by Maltese mafia”, which according to Attorney General Sadiq Al-Sour is happening every day.

More details

<http://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20170131/local/libya-wants-maltese-authorities-to-stop-smuggling-of-fuels.638170>

- **Humanitarian crisis in Libya as refugees raped, tortured and held in ‘concentration camp like’ conditions**

Refugees in Libya are being subjected to torture, rape and even execution by human traffickers who are holding them, a German newspaper report claimed on Sunday, citing German diplomats posted in Africa.

More details

<http://www.albawaba.com/news/humanitarian-crisis-libya-refugees-raped-tortured-and-held-%E2%80%98concentration-camp-like%E2%80%99-conditions>

- **African Union Countries Full List: Morocco Joins Continental Bloc after 33-Year Absence**

The African Union readmitted former member Morocco after a 33-year gap, following months of lobbying and a heated debate at the 28th African leaders summit in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on Monday.

More details

<http://www.ibtimes.com/african-union-countries-full-list-morocco-joins-continental-bloc-after-33-year-2483782>

- **Tunisia expects 3.7 percent economic growth in five year plan**

The rate has been revised downwards from four percent due to the growth regression in the fiscal year 2016, said Tunisian Minister of Investment and International Cooperation Fadhel Abdelkafi.

More details

[http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-01/31/c\\_136021905.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-01/31/c_136021905.htm)

- **Quebec attack: PM recommends to provide all necessary assistance to Tunisian victims**

Prime Minister Youssef Chahed had a telephone talk with the widow of Boubaker Thabti, who died in the terrorist attack on Sunday, in an Islamic cultural centre in Quebec City in southeastern Canada.

On this occasion, the Prime Minister expressed his sincere condolences to the widow of the deceased, Information Adviser Mofdi Mseddi to the Prime Ministry told TAP.

More details

<http://www.tap.info.tn/en/Portal-Politics/8666469-quebec-attack-pm>

- **Abid Briki: Tunisia had 800,000 civil servants by late 2016**

"The number of civil servants is rising again according to the statistics of 2016," he said during a hearing session before the Committee on Administrative Reform, Good Governance, Corruption and Control of the Management of Public Funds, adding that the reform of the public administration will start in March.

More details

<http://www.tap.info.tn/en/Portal-Politics/8665888-abid-briki-tunisia>

- **9) Ministry of Cultural Affairs, INLUCC sign co-operation agreement**

The agreement provides for anchoring the principles of good governance, the introduction of rules of transparency in the administration, finance and management resources within the ministry and institutions fall under its supervision.

More details

<http://www.tap.info.tn/en/Portal-Culture-and-Media/8665352-ministry-of>

- **Quebec terrorist attack: Two Algerian nationals likely to be among victims**

Two Algerian nationals could be among the victims of the terrorist attack on the Islamic Cultural Centre of Quebec, in Canada, on Sunday evening, said Monday the spokesperson of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Abdelaziz Benali Cherif.

More details

<http://en.aps.dz/algeria/16460-quebec-terrorist-attack-two-algerian-nationals-likely-to-be-among-victims>

## 9. AFGHANISTAN – PAKISTAN

- **Afghanistan ready to talk unconditionally with Taliban**

Afghanistan's top envoy to Pakistan Omar Zakhilwal said his government is open to unconditional peace negotiations with the Taliban insurgents, Chinese media reported Monday.

More details

<http://paktribune.com/news/Afghanistan-ready-to-talk-unconditionally-with-Taliban-278136.html>

- **20 ISIS loyalists killed by own bomb in South of Afghanistan**

At least 20 loyalists of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) terrorist group were killed in a premature bomb explosion in southern Zabul province of Afghanistan. Local official said late Monday that the incident took place on Sunday evening in Arghandab district.

More details

<http://www.khaama.com/20-isis-loyalists-killed-by-own-bomb-in-south-of-afghanistan-02772>

- **Three Insurgents Killed While Planting Roadside Mine**

At least five Taliban insurgents were busy planting explosives on the main road in Arghandab district in Zabul province when the incident happened.

More details

<http://www.tolonews.com/afghanistan/three-insurgents-killed-while-planting-roadside-mine>

- **Pakistan claims soldier killed in firing from Afghanistan**

The Pakistani security officials claim a soldier died after sustaining injuries from firing along the Durand Line. Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR), the media wing of Pakistani military, in a statement said the incident took place on Saturday close to Khyber Agency.

More details

<http://www.khaama.com/pakistan-claims-soldier-killed-in-firing-from-afghanistan-02771>

- **The Trump ban on immigrants from Muslim countries sends shivers down Pakistan's spine**

The Modi government is wasting no time and has sent Ajit Doval to Moscow where, on 30th January, he met with Russian Security Council Secretary Nikolai Patrushev, a key aide of President Putin. President Trump and Putin have already spoken at length on how to combat Islamic Terrorism. India is on the right track and the perfect storm is building up for Pakistan. As an Indian I am delighted at this turn of events.

More details

<http://blogs.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/no-free-lunch/the-trump-ban-on-immigrants-from-muslim-countries-sends-shivers-down-pakistans-spine/>

- **Kashmir is a bone of contention between Pakistan-India: Bilawal**

Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said South Asia should be the hub of energy and economic strength but instead, the disputed territory of Kashmir stands as a bone of contention between the two nuclear powers of the region – India and Pakistan.

More detail

<http://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2017/01/31/kashmir-is-a-bone-of-contention-between-pakistan-india-bilawal/>

- **Pakistan: Protests expected following arrest of alleged mastermind of Mumbai attacks**

Pakistani police confined the accused architect of the 2008 Mumbai attacks to house arrest on Tuesday, manning barricades outside his home in the city of Lahore as supporters vowed protests.

More details

<https://asiancorrespondent.com/2017/01/pakistan-protests-expected-following-arrest-alleged-mastermind-mumbai-attacks/>

- **Pakistan Braces for Protests after the Detention of Suspected Mumbai Attacks Mastermind**

Pakistani police are expecting unrest after Hafiz Saeed, the suspected mastermind of the deadly Mumbai attacks in 2008, was placed under house arrest Monday night in Lahore.

More details

<http://time.com/4654747/pakistan-mumbai-attacks-hafiz-saeed-detained/>

- **Only six milk brands fit for consumption in Pakistan**

After conducting tests on 16 Ultra High Temperature (UHT) and pasteurised milk brands, the Pakistan Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (PCSIR) has only found six brands of milk safe for consumption, the National Assembly was told on Monday.

More details

<http://www.dawn.com/news/1311792/only-six-milk-brands-fit-for-consumption-in-pakistan>

## 10. TURKEY AND THE MIDDLE EAST

- **Helping Syria's displaced a long haul for Turkish charities**

Besides hosting nearly 3 million Syrian refugees, Turkey has also been working to ensure that the families struggling to survive inside war-torn Syria are cared for at home. Turkey has already dispatched some 2,000 trucks full of humanitarian aid to its southern neighbor Syria since December and more is on its way as the displaced struggle to survive in the conflict-ridden country.

More Details:

<http://www.dailysabah.com/turkey/2017/01/31/helping-syrias-displaced-a-long-haul-for-turkish-charities>

- **Turkey urges Trump to scrap 'offensive' refugee policy**

US President Donald Trump's immigration and refugee restrictions are "offensive", a top Turkish official was quoted as saying on Tuesday, in the first explicit criticism by Ankara of the controversial policy. "It is not possible to accept this," said Kurtulmus, who is also the chief government spokesman, according to the daily. "The policy should be reviewed." On Friday, Trump issued an executive order that bars US entry for travellers from seven mainly Muslim countries -- Iran, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria and Yemen -- for 90 days.

More Details:

<http://www.worldbulletin.net/turkey/184013/turkey-urges-trump-to-scrap-offensive-refugee-policy>

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

At least 30 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 on Tuesday. Turkish authorities use the word "neutralized" in their statements to imply the terrorists in question were killed, captured, or wounded.

More Details:

<http://aa.com.tr/en/todays-headlines/30-daesh-terrorists-neutralized-in-northern-syria/738371>

*\*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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