



MIDDLE EAST DAILY BULLETIN

GÜNLÜK ORTADOĞU BÜLTENİ

Domestic Policy in the Middle East Countries

Bölge Ülkelerinde İç Siyaset

The Restructuring Proces of Iraq

Irak'ın Yeniden Yapılanma Süreci

Energy Security

Enerji Güvenliği

Economy News

Ekonomi Haberleri

Peace Process

Barış Süreci

Ethnic and Secterian Groups

Etnik ve Mezhepsel Gruplar

Non State Actors

Devlet-dışı Aktörler

Relations with the West

Batı'yla İlişkiler

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01 JUNE 2017

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1. IRAQ

- **Mass grave of relics of 60 civilians found in western Mosul**

Mosul (IraqiNews.com) A mass grave composed of relics of 60 civilians, including women, killed by Islamic State, was found in western Mosul,” a local source from Nineveh province has said.

More Details

<http://www.iraqinews.com/iraq-war/mass-grave-relics-60-civilians-found-western-mosul/>

- **Russian President Expected to Meet with PM Barzani**

Russian President Vladimir Putin is expected to hold a meeting with the Prime Minister of Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG), Nechirvan Barzani, on the sidelines of the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum (SPIEF).

More Details

<http://www.basnews.com/index.php/en/news/kurdistan/354499>

- **Kurdistan Communist Party EX-Secretary Passes Away and PUK Politburo Commiserates**

PUK Politburo directs a statement to Kurdistan Communist Party and the friends of Aziz Muhammad on the mournful occasion of his death. Dear Kurdistan Communist Party Dear Friends and Family of Aziz Muhammad We were deeply saddened by the Passing of Aziz Muhammad, previous secretary of Kurdistan Communist Party and fellow Kurdish renegade. We direct our condolences to the friends and family of Aziz Muhammad to let them know that we share their grief.

More Details

http://www.pukmedia.com/EN/EN_Direje.aspx?Jimare=40455

- **Iraq's Abadi accepts Finance Minister Resignation**

Iraqi Prime Minister Haider Abadi has accepted Abdul Razek al-Issa's resignation as Minister of Finance. Al-Issa will only serve as Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research.

More Details

<http://www.thebaghdadpost.com/en/story/11403/Iraq-s-Abadi-accepts-Finance-Minister-resignation>

- **Iraqi Army bans the burka in Mosul after ISIS sleeper cells use it to conduct attacks**

tively, a temporal banned was imposed on the Niqab and Burka in the city of Mosul on Tuesday. A military source in the Iraqi Armed Forces told Al-Masdar News that the aforementioned garments had been used extensively over the past week by both female and male ISIS members to conduct suicide bombings and hit-and-run attacks on army checkpoints.

More Details

<https://www.almasdarnews.com/article/iraqi-army-bans-burka-mosul-isis-sleeper-cells-use-conduct-attacks/>

- **Othman: Iraq Lacks Statesmen Able To Extricate Him from His Ordeal**

Iraq lacks statesmen, who are able to lift the country out of its current plight, said Kurdish leader, former MP Mahmoud Othman, added "External interference in internal affairs increases the country's problems."

More Details

http://www.ninanews.com/News_Details.aspx?KQyjqPdwpF2aQvQWt%252bNBAA%253d%253d

- **Reapers and Tornados strike multiple Islamic State targets in Mosul**

A Reaper, conducting surveillance south-west of Raqqa on Wednesday, kept watch on a small group of terrorists and was able to conduct a successful attack with a Hellfire missile.

More Details

<https://ukdefencejournal.org.uk/reapers-tornados-strike-multiple-islamic-state-targets-mosul/>

- **Hundreds Reported Killed in Mosul Airstrikes; 117 Killed in Other Iraq Violence**

Hundreds of civilians are reported killed in airstrikes in Mosul. It is unclear which countries were involved in what is being described as the "carpet bombing" of Zanjili after Iraqi troops were unable to advance. At least 47 were killed. Some sources believe the number of dead is closer to 200.

More Details

<http://original.antiwar.com/updates/2017/05/31/hundreds-reported-killed-in-mosul-airstrikes-117-killed-in-other-iraq-violence/>

- **ISIL fighters seal off Mosul mosque for last stand**

Residents say dozens of fighters taking up positions near the medieval mosque where ISIL's leader declared a caliphate.

More Details

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/06/isil-fighters-seal-mosul-mosque-stand-170601023012546.html>

- **Zynab Al Harbiya's father says girl killed in Iraq had 'big heart'**

The father of a 12-year-old Melbourne girl who died in a car bomb explosion in Baghdad has spoken of his grief upon seeing her body, calling Islamic State attackers “monsters” who had killed a little girl with a “big heart”.

More Details

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/jun/01/zynab-al-harbiyas-father-says-girl-killed-in-iraq-had-big-heart>

- **Fortified fleet of IS suicide vehicles captured by Iraqi forces**

The vehicles were captured near the Old City in battle-torn Mosul, where IS jihadists are attempting to repel Iraqi forces trying to recapture the city.

More Details

<http://news.sky.com/story/fortified-fleet-of-is-suicide-vehicles-captured-by-iraqi-forces-10900056>

- **Mosul’s Muslims rebuild church in solidarity with Christians**

Muslim neighbors in Iraq helped rebuild a church that had been destroyed by Daesh militants. In a gesture of solidarity, Iraqi volunteers helped their Christians neighbors, who are still encountering abuse by Daesh, and rebuilt what was once their house of worship.

More Details

<http://www.arabnews.com/node/1107911/middle-east>

- **UAE press: Iraq attack shows Daesh’s depravity**

Last year, during Ramadan, the upmarket Karrada district in Baghdad was full of families shopping and socialising when Daesh detonated a suicide truck bomb, killing 324 civilians. It was the single biggest loss of life in an attack since the 2003 US-led invasion of Iraq.

More Details

<http://wam.ae/en/details/1395302617059>

- **Wood Mac: Iraqi oil sector underperforming**

A high-risk operational environment coupled with a difficult bureaucracy and market conditions means Iraq is underperforming in oil, Wood Mackenzie found.

More Details

http://www.upi.com/Energy-News/2017/05/31/Wood-Mac-Iraqi-oil-sector-underperforming/8261496228197/?utm_source=sec&utm_campaign=sl&utm_medium=1

- **Hillary, Who Voted For Iraq War, Now Claims We ‘Didn’t Think It Was A Good Idea To Engage In Invasions’**

Clinton, in answering a question by an Israeli reporter about the “clear and present danger” apparently posed by President Trump, said, “When you give a blank check to the Russians and the Saudis, and other who are engaged in authoritarian and dictatorial regimes, you are sending a message; ‘we don’t care what you do.’”

More Details

<http://dailycaller.com/2017/05/31/hillary-who-voted-for-iraq-war-now-claims-we-didnt-think-it-was-a-good-idea-to-engage-in-invasions/>

- **Iraq Faces Obstacles On Path To Oil Production Target**

Despite having grown oil production since 2009, water constraints, midstream infrastructure woes, contract terms and other aboveground factors have hindered Iraq’s ability to hit production targets, according to a report released May 31.

More Details

<http://www.epmag.com/iraq-faces-obstacles-path-oil-production-target-1606846>

- **Iraq’s National Soccer Team Aims to Prove ‘That Nothing Can Divide Us’**

Iraq’s national soccer team will take on neighboring Jordan on Thursday in a gleaming stadium in Basra — a city that witnessed some of the country’s worst violence following the toppling of Saddam Hussein.

More Details

<http://www.nbcnews.com/news/world/iraq-s-national-soccer-team-aims-prove-nothing-can-divide-n766561>

2. SYRIA

- **ISIL militants leave Raqqa, cross Euphrates**

The ministry said in a statement the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), together with the US, UK and French special forces, have "virtually blocked" Raqqa from the north."At the same time, the SDF stopped its offensive, resulting in ruptures in the IS' [Daesh] ring of encirclement. Using this, the terrorists cross the Euphrates and seek to transfer their formations in the southern direction of Syria," it said.The Russian troop command in Syria will do its utmost to prevent ISIL from breaking through further south from Raqqa, the ministry added.

More Details:

<http://en.mehrnews.com/news/125693/ISIL-militants-leave-Raqqa-cross-Euphrates>

- **Prime Minister: Customssector has significantincometonationaleconomygrowth**

Prime Minister Imad Khamis underlined the need to set up a comprehensive plan to improve the customs sector in order to enhance its key role and significant income to the national economy.Khamis remarks came during a meeting at theDirectorate General of Customs on Wednesday with stress laid on the need to evaluate relevant legislations, train employees and cadres and provide necessary inspection equipment to upgrade performance.

MoreDetails:

<http://sana.sy/en/?p=107301>

- **Russian jets halt advance on desertoutpost, says FSA**

Western-backed Syrian rebels said on Wednesday that Russian jets attacked them as they tried to advance against militias in a region of Syria'ssoutheasterndesert. The announcement came as Syriangovernmenttroopspushedahead in theiroffensiveagainstDaeshandmilitants in centralandnorthernparts of thecountry.

MoreDetails:

<http://gulftoday.ae/portal/b9a1cdcd-8836-43a7-abb7-8de03aacba3f.aspx>

- **Hashd Al-Shaabi to liberateTanfborder-crossing**

The sources said that following deployment of forces at borders with Syria the Hashd al-Shaabi is coordinating with the Syrian army to jointly storm ISIS and free al-Tanf border town and region. The sources further said that the army soldiers have now engaged in tough battle with terrorists in Syria's

Badiyeh (desert) towards South to recapture the al-Tanf border-crossing, adding Hasha al-Shaabi tries to go through the army-held regions in Syria to move towards North and open a way to al-Tanf.

MoreDetails:

http://en.abna24.com/news/middle-east/hashd-al-shaabi-to-liberate-tanf-border-crossing_833359.html

- **Syria's national soccer team can't escape the country's brutal civil war**

After years of grisly conflict, Syrian soccer players are facing that exact dilemma. “The Assad regime is essentially taking the position that the team is above politics. That it’s the one place where Syrians from all sides can come together in peace,” says Steve Fainaru, a senior writer with ESPN.

MoreDetails:

<https://www.pri.org/stories/2017-05-31/syrias-national-soccer-team-cant-escape-countrys-brutal-civil-war>

- **Syrian army destroys ISIL gatherings, movements in Deir Ezzor**

Syrian Army and Armed Forces units, backed by the Syrian Air Force, carried out special operations against movements and supply routes for ISIL terrorist organization in Deir Ezzor province. SANA’s correspondent in Deir Ezzor said that the Air Force killed and injured a number of ISIL terrorists in a series of intensive airstrikes against their sites and gatherings in al-Rishdieh neighborhood in Deir Ezzor city and the vicinity of the airport.

MoreDetails:

<http://en.mehrnews.com/news/125691/Syrian-army-destroys-ISIL-gatherings-movements-in-Deir-Ezzor>

- **Damascus strongly condemns EU decision to extend sanctions against Syria**

The Syrian government strongly condemns the EU decision to extend sanctions against Syria. According to Damascus, such restrictive measures are aimed exclusively at supporting the armed opposition and escalation the situation not only in Syria, but in the Middle East.

MoreDetails:

<https://en.insidesyriamc.com/2017/05/31/damascus-strongly-condemns-eu-decision-to-extend-sanctions-against-syria/>

- **U.S.-led coalition strike kills founder of Islamic State media outlet**

An air strike by the U.S.-led coalition has killed the founder of the Islamic State propaganda media outlet Amaq in the eastern Syrian province of Deir al-Zor, his brother said in a Facebook post on Wednesday, Reuters reported. Reuters could not independently confirm whether he had been killed. There was no immediate comment from the United States-led coalition against Islamic State.

More Details:

<http://en.trend.az/world/arab/2761272.html>

- **Russian airstrikes take out 80 ISIS fighters & dozens of vehicles on march from Raqqa to Palmyra**

Russian jets destroyed a large Islamic State convoy attempting to escape the Syrian city of Raqqa and roll towards Palmyra. Dozens of vehicles carrying heavy weaponry manned by over 80 terrorists were hit. On Monday night, three Islamic State (IS, formerly ISIS/ISIL) convoys left Raqqa heading south towards Palmyra, the Russian Defense Ministry said in a Thursday statement. The airstrikes were called in after the movements were spotted by reconnaissance units.

More Details:

<https://www.rt.com/news/390383-russian-jets-raqqa-airstrike/>

3. IRAN

- **Turkmenistan, Iran stress further expansion of ties**

Iranian deputy FM Rahimpour and Turkmen Foreign Minister Rasit Meredow met in Ashgabat Wed. to confer on a wide range of issues regarding bilateral, regional and international relations.

More details:

<http://en.mehrnews.com/news/125694/Turkmenistan-Iran-stress-further-expansion-of-ties>

- **Gazprom in deal to build Iran compressed gas plant**

National Iranian Gas Company (NIGC) and Russia's Gazprom are planning a deal to build a compressed gas plant in Iran, a report said.

More details:

http://www.tradearabia.com/news/CONS_325804.html

- **Iran's Growing Casualty Count In Yemen**

On March 21 of this year, "Sandstorm Madar," a massive dust storm pushed by wild winds and saturated with thunderstorms shrouded Saudi Arabia and angled towards the Kingdom's southwest border with Yemen. Debris-laden gusts blocked the sky, closed schools, reduced ground visibility to less than a meter, and obscured satellite coverage. Against the Madar's cloaking headwinds, an Iranian Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) officer, known by his nom de guerre "Abu Ali," led a 52-man Houthi armored assault convoy armed with Katyusha missile launchers out of the northern Yemeni governorate of Sa'ada, and into Saudi Arabia's Asir border province. Their aim was to conduct a series of early morning raids.

More details:

<https://warontherocks.com/2017/06/irans-growing-casualty-count-in-yemen/?singlepage=1>

- **Fire Extinguished at Iran's South Pars Gas Field**

Firefighters brought a fire at Iran's giant South Pars gas field under control on Thursday morning. A fire broke out at a propane pipeline in South Pars gas field's phases 20 and 21, on the onshore units of the giant complex, on late Wednesday night.

More details:

<https://www.tasnimnews.com/en/news/2017/06/01/1425302/fire-extinguished-at-iran-s-south-pars-gas-field>

- **Turkish companies to build ships for Iran**

Turkish and Iranian companies have signed an agreement on construction and sale of ships for a total amount of \$95 million, the Turkish media outlets reported June 1.

More details:

<http://en.trend.az/business/economy/2761313.html>

- **President Rouhani: People true winners of elections**

President Hassan Rouhani said on Wednesday that the true winners of the May 19 elections were the Iranian people and the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei.

More details:

<http://www.irna.ir/en/News/82551555/>

- **Iranian hard-liners lose battle over parliament leadership**

The coalition between Iranian moderates and Reformists appears to have been emboldened with the re-election of two prominent lawmakers as deputy parliamentary speakers.

More details:

<http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2017/05/iran-parliament-speaker-larijani-motahari-pezeshtkian-electio.html#ixzz4ijoUGl9A>

- **Iran: Factional Disputes Continuing Over Presidential Election Vote Rigging**

Iranian government spokesman Bahram Ghasemi responded to recent remarks stated by former presidential candidate Ebrahim Raisi. “It is not right to use terms such as election engineering. The entire election process was carried out under the Guardian Council’s supervision,” he said.

More details:

<http://www.ncr-iran.org/en/news/election/iran-election-2017-news/22916-iran-factional-disputes-continuing-over-presidential-election-vote-rigging>

- **Iranian Kurds march to war: 'We don't care how strong the enemy is'**

Having laid down their arms for nearly 20 years, the leftist Iranian Kurdish group the PDKI is training new recruits for battle

More details:

<http://www.middleeasteye.net/news/peshmerga-and-iran-ready-fight-517501721>

- **Iran to Operate Arak Nuclear Reactor in Three or Four Years**

The Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) affirmed today that the redesign of the Arak nuclear reactor is in line with the planned schedule so that it could be operational at the latest within four years.

More details:

<http://www.plenglish.com/index.php?o=rn&id=13592&SEO=iran-to-operate-arak-nuclear-reactor-in-three-or-four-years>

4. ISRAEL – PALESTINE

- **Jordan warns Israel of deteriorating ties over 'extremist' visits to al-Aqsa**

In a curt letter to the Israeli embassy in Jordan, the Jordanian government blasts 'extremists' defiling the al-Aqsa mosque and warns Israel that ties between the two are becoming strained.

More details:

<http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-4969915,00.html>

- **PA officials: Trump showed Abbas videos of PA incitement**

PA officials confirmed reports in Israel that US President Donald Trump had lambasted PA Chairman Mahmoud Abbas during their meeting in Bethlehem over the PA's involvement in anti-Israel incitement.

More details:

<http://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx/230412>

- **Trump Expected to Step back from Moving US Embassy to Jerusalem Al-Quds**

US President Donald Trump is stepping back from his campaign pledge to move the US embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem al-Quds.

More details:

<http://en.alalam.ir/news/1976639>

- **For Jerusalem Palestinians, a dilemma to seek Israeli citizenship**

It's a dilemma many Palestinians from Jerusalem confront: Resign yourself to becoming an Israeli citizen or press ahead as a person without a state.

More details:

<http://www.france24.com/en/20170601-jerusalem-palestinians-dilemma-seek-israeli-citizenship>

- **Israel is 'key driver' of Palestinian hardships in occupied territories – UN report**

Israel is a "key driver" of Palestinian humanitarian suffering, according to a UN report which cited the country's occupation of the West Bank and the blockade of Gaza.

More details:

<https://www.rt.com/news/390380-israeli-palestinian-suffering-un/>

- **Israeli Soldiers Abduct a Palestinian Teenage Girl In Hebron**

Israeli soldiers abducted, on Tuesday evening, a Palestinian teenage girl, near the Ibrahimi Mosque, in Hebron city, in the southern part of the occupied West Bank

More details:

<http://imemc.org/article/israeli-soldiers-abduct-a-palestinian-teenage-girl-in-hebron/>

- **Israeli ambassador to UN Danny Danon elected VP of General Assembly, win seen as a triumph for Israel**

Israel's ambassador to the United Nations was elected Wednesday as vice president of the 72nd session of the U.N. General Assembly, which is considered a significant triumph by the Israeli mission to the U.N.

More details:

<http://abcnewsradioonline.com/world-news/israeli-ambassador-to-un-danny-danon-elected-vp-of-general-a.html>

- **UN Chief: “Denial of Israel’s Right to Exist is Anti-Semitism”**

The head of the United Nations told leaders from the Simon Wiesenthal Center that “denial of Israel’s right to exist is anti-Semitism,” the Jewish organization announced in a press release on Tuesday.

More details:

<http://www.thetower.org/5024-un-chief-denial-of-israels-right-to-exist-is-anti-semitism/>

- **Gaza to see forced military retirement in June**

The Palestinian Authority (PA) is set to enact in June a controversial law that will force about half of Gaza's security personnel to retire, while leaving the West Bank's force intact. Officials in the security services have started contacting staff members to inform them of the change.

More details:

<http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2017/05/palestine-early-retirement-law-military-staff-economy-crisis.html>

- **Hamas thanks Lebanon Education Ministry for restoring Palestinian cause in curriculum**

The Hamas movement expressed its gratitude to Lebanese Education Minister Marwan Hamada on Tuesday, a day after the minister reportedly called for reintroducing the Palestinian cause in Lebanon's school curriculum.

More details:

<http://www.maannnews.com/Content.aspx?ID=777426>

5. JORDAN and LEBANON

- **Saudi Campaign continues distributing food baskets to Syrians in Jordan**

Saudi National Campaign to Support Brothers in Syria continues distributing food baskets to Syrian refugees in Irbid, Jordan, where 555 families comprising 4807 people were targeted in the eleventh station of its program during the holy month of Ramadan. Each basket contains 14 food items with a total weight of approximately 48 kg suffice for a family for about one month.

MoreDetails:

<http://sites.alriyadh.com/en/article/1159573/Saudi-Campaign-continues-distributing-food-baskets-to-Syrians-in-Jordan>

- **Jordan Cuts Government Spending by \$288 Million in 2017 State Budget**

The Cabinet of Jordan on Tuesday decided to reduce the expenditure of ministries and public departments by JD204 million (\$288 million). At a session chaired by acting prime minister Mamdouh Abbadi, the Council of Ministers decided to slash expenditures in the 2017 state budget by JD174.1 million, of which JD100 million will be deducted from current expenditure and JD74.1 from capital expenditure, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.

MoreDetails:

<http://www.albawaba.com/business/jordan-cuts-government-spending-by-%24288-million-2017-981082>

- **Lebanese ministry bans 'WonderWoman' film over Israeli actress**

Lebanon's Interior Ministry banned the new "Wonder Woman" film from cinemas on Wednesday because an Israeli actress plays the lead role, a ministry source and a security official said. Lebanon considers Israel an enemy country and the Ministry of Economy and Trade oversees a boycott of any business transactions concerning Israel.

MoreDetails:

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-lebanon-israel-film-boycott-idUSKBN18R2GX>

- **Jordan protests Israeli extremists' storming of Al Aqsa Mosque**

The Jordanian Ministry of Foreign and Expatriate Affairs has handed the Israeli Embassy in Amman a memo to protest allowing Jewish extremists into the Al Aqsa Mosque/Haram Al Sharif under the protection of the Israeli police. According to the Petra News Agency, the Jordanian government asked the Israeli government in the memo to immediately put an end to such acts of aggression and provocation and respect the Jordanian role in caring for Islamic Holy sites in Jerusalem Jordan's 1994 peace treaty with Israel recognises Jordan's role as custodian of Muslim and Christian shrines in the city, which was occupied by Israel during the 1967 war.

More Details:

<http://wam.ae/en/details/1395302617062>

- **Adwan Meets FPM Officials, Says 'Closer than Ever' to Electoral Law**

Lebanese Forces deputy chief MP George Adwan held talks on the electoral law Wednesday with Free Patriotic Movement chief Jebran Bassil and other FPM officials. "We are closer than ever before to reaching an electoral law," said Adwan after the meeting at the Foreign Ministry in Ashrafieh.

MoreDetails:

<http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/230780-adwan-meets-fpm-officials-says-closer-than-ever-to-electoral-law>

- **The Human RightsCost of a ParliamentExtension in Lebanon**

If Lebanon's parliamentarians postpone general elections for a third time, they will have more than doubled the time they were elected to serve, dashing the hopes of citizens who have been waiting to elect their representatives since 2013. The last general election was in June 2009. Because Lebanon's voting age is 21, some people are close to turning 30 but have never had a chance to elect their parliamentary representatives.

MoreDetails:

<https://www.hrw.org/news/2017/05/31/human-rights-cost-parliament-extension-lebanon>

- **King follows up on progress in public sector development**

His Majesty King Abdullah on Wednesday said that those who hinder plans to improve the performance of the public sector and other economic programmes would be held accountable. He

told a meeting of officials tasked with implementing public sector development policies that the performance of each official would be evaluated in accordance with the size of achievement and in case of failure to accomplish the tasks vested in them. At the meeting, attended by Prime Minister Hani Mulki, the King urged full commitment by concerned parties to reform the civil service and remove any obstacles and overcome any challenges facing the development plans, describing the plan as an “irreversible strategic trajectory”, including the e-government scheme, to which “all ministries and insututions must commit”, a Royal Court statement said.

More Details:

<http://www.jordantimes.com/news/local/king-follows-progress-public-sector-development>

- **Hariri, Jumblatt at loggerheads over corruption claims**

Prime Minister Saad Hariri and Progressive Socialist Party leader MP Walid Jumblatt were embroiled in a verbal and indirect dispute over corruption claims.

More Details:

<http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Lebanon-News/2017/Jun-01/407994-hariri-jumblatt-at-loggerheads-over-corruption-claims.ashx>

- **Lebanon: Efforts to Resolve ‘Rift’ Between Aoun, Berri**

With the end of the Lebanese Parliament’s ordinary cycle on Wednesday, attention is focused on the session scheduled by Speaker Nabih Berri on June 5, which is expected to witness disagreements over “authorities” and the interpretation of the Constitution by President Michel Aoun and Speaker Nabih Berri.Parliament convenes in two ordinary cycles from mid-March till the end of May and from mid-October through the end of December, according to the Lebanese Constitution.As the ordinary cycle ended today, deputies can no longer convene to pass laws unless the president and the prime minister agree to open an extraordinary parliamentary cycle.

More Details:

<https://english.aawsat.com/caroline-akoum/news-middle-east/lebanon-efforts-resolve-rift-aoun-berri>

- **EU ready to help Lebanon organize parliamentary elections: ambassador**

The European Union ambassador to Lebanon Christina Lassen said here on Wednesday that EU is ready to help Lebanon organize its upcoming parliamentary elections."The EU is ready to provide support for the preparation and the organization of the elections, including by deploying an Election Observation Mission," Lassen said following her meeting with Lebanon's Minister of Interior Nohad Machnouk.

More Details:

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-06/01/c_136329445.htm

6. ARABIAN PENINSULA AND THE GULF OF BASRA

- **Saudi Arabia Condemns Car Bomb Attack in Baghdad**

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has expressed its strong condemnation and denunciation of the terrorist attack in Baghdad, Iraq, according to an official source at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The source has expressed Saudi Arabia's strong condemnation of the car bomb attack in Karradah neighborhood, which left a number of civilians and police officers dead and wounded, according to the Saudi Press Agency (SPA).

More Details:

<https://english.aawsat.com/theaawsat/news-middle-east/saudi-arabia/saudi-arabia-condemns-car-bomb-attack-baghdad>

- **King Hails Jordan Ties**

His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al-Khalifa hailed the historic relations binding Bahrain and Jordan, reiterating the Kingdom's keenness on strengthening joint ties in all fields. This came as he received at Al-Safriya Palace Jordanian Minister of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates Aymen Al-Safadi, who conveyed greetings to HM the King from King Abdulla II ibn Al-Hussain of Jordan, who wished Bahrain and its people further progress and prosperity.

More Details:

<http://www.newsofbahrain.com/viewNews.php?ppld=33991&TYPE=Posts&pid=21&MNU=2&SUB=1>

- **Bahrain Closes Main Secular Opposition Group**

A court in Bahrain on Wednesday ordered the largest secular opposition group to dissolve and its assets seized for supporting terrorism and failing to recognize the constitution. The closure of the National Democratic Action Society (Waad) is the latest blow to dissenting voices in the Sunni-led kingdom, which has cracked down on the Shiite majority and pro-democracy reformers since the 2011 Arab Spring uprisings.

More Details:

<http://www.dw.com/en/bahrain-closes-main-secular-opposition-group/a-39073290>

- **Fuel Price Patrols by Consumer Champion in Oman**

Hundreds of teams have been created to ensure the public is not abused due to the monthly fuel price changes, consumer chiefs have revealed. Umar Faisal Al Jahdamy, deputy director of Public Authority for Consumer Protection (PACP), told the Times of Oman that more than 200 teams had been set up to monitor prices at the pumps.

More Details:

<http://timesofoman.com/article/110298/Oman/Petrol-price-patrols-by-consumer-champion-in-Oman>

- **Gulf Arab Dispute Rattles Trump's Anti-Iran Axis**

Just 10 days after President Donald Trump called on Muslim countries to stand united against Iran, a public feud between Qatar and some of its Gulf Arab neighbors is jolting his attempt to tip the regional balance of power against Tehran.

More Details:

<http://www.egyptindependent.com/gulf-arab-dispute-iran/>

- **Russian Oil Companies Discuss Cooperation with Saudi Arabia in 30 Various Fields**

Russian oil companies are exploring cooperation opportunities with Saudi Arabia on specific projects in 30 various fields, in particular, mining, exploration, development of the petrochemical industry, oilfield services, Russian Energy Minister Alexander Novak said Wednesday.

More Details:

<https://sputniknews.com/business/201706011054179474-russia-saudi-arabia-oil-cooperation/>

- **UAE Elected Vice-President for 72nd Session of UN General Assembly**

The United Nations General Assembly unanimously elected Ambassador Lana Zaki Nusseibeh, UAE's Permanent Representative to the United Nations in New York, as one of its 21 Vice-Presidents for the 72nd session. Ambassador Nusseibeh will represent the Asia-Pacific Group of Member States.

More Details:

<http://wam.ae/en/details/1395302617060>

- **Qatar Wants to Stay Top in LNG**

Qatar Petroleum has signed an agreement with Japan's engineering company Chiyoda to study further boosting LNG capacity in order to remain the world's largest LNG exporter. Qatar, the top

LNG producer with a capacity of about 77 Mtpa, is facing a growing competition from new LNG sources including Australia and the U.S.

More Details:

<http://maritime-executive.com/article/qatar-wants-to-stay-top-in-lng>

- **Qatari Emir Arrives in Kuwait Amid Inter-Gulf Tensions**

Qatari Emir Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad al-Thani on Wednesday arrived in Kuwait City to meet Kuwaiti counterpart Sabah al-Ahmad al-Sabah, according to Kuwait's official KUNA news agency. "Qatar's emir arrived in the country for a brotherly visit, during which he plans to congratulate Sheikh Sabah on the occasion of Ramadan," KUNA reported.

More Details:

<http://aa.com.tr/en/middle-east/qatari-emir-arrives-in-kuwait-amid-inter-gulf-tensions/832053>

- **Saudi Arabia Blatantly Subservient to US: Yemeni Houthi Leader**

Leader of Yemen's Houthi Ansarullah movement has slammed Saudi Arabia for doing the bidding of the United States, saying the Riyadh regime has become absolutely subservient to Washington's policies.

More Details:

<http://www.presstv.com/Detail/2017/06/01/523823/Yemen-Saudi-Arabia-Ansarullah-US-Trump>

7. EGYPT

- **US Senators Criticize Egypt's Crackdown on NGOs**

Three U.S. Republican senators Wednesday criticized a law enacted by Egypt to regulate the work of nongovernmental organizations as a sign of a "draconian" crackdown on human rights. The measure, issued Monday after being ratified by President Abdel Fattah el-Sissi, restricts NGO activity to developmental and social work and introduces jail terms of up to five years for noncompliance.

More Details:

<https://www.voanews.com/a/senators-criticize-egypts-crackdown-on-ngos/3882158.html>

- **Egyptian airstrikes kill terrorist leader in Libya's Derna**

A local source from al-Hereish hospital in Libya's Derna has confirmed the death of the leader of the Shura Council of Mujahedeen in Derna abu Mus'ab al-Shaaria, known as al-Amir, in airstrikes

launched by Egypt in the city over the past few days, Afrigate News reported. Libyan Brigadier General Abdul Salam al-Hassi said the airstrikes targeted the council as well as Abu Salim Martyrs' Brigade, two groups that ally with al-Qaeda.

More Details:

<http://www.egyptindependent.com/libya-airstrikes-derna/>

- **Egypt says embassy building 'significantly' damaged in Kabul blast, strongly condemns attack**

Egypt condemned “in the strongest terms” an attack in Kabul on Wednesday that killed at least 80 people when a massive truck bomb ripped through the city's diplomatic quarter. Cairo said the exterior of the Egyptian Embassy building was also damaged. A statement from the foreign ministry said the explosion was very powerful, causing "significant" damage to the Egyptian embassy's building and the ambassador's residence in Afghanistan. One of the building's guards was hurt.

More Details:

<http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/64/269907/Egypt/Politics-/Egypt-says-embassy-building-significantly-damaged-i.aspx>

- **Egypt: Vehicle loaded with explosives seized in tunnel crossing Suez**

The Armed Forces seized on Wednesday a vehicle loaded with explosives in Martyr Ahmed Hamdy tunnel, said Armed Forces spokesperson Tamer al-Refaei on his official Facebook page. Two people in the vehicle were arrested, according to Refaei, adding that these explosive materials are used in manufacturing IEDs.

More Details:

<http://www.imra.org.il/story.php3?id=72532>

- **Sisi calls for facing any threat to Egypt's stability**

President Abdel Fattah El Sisi on Tuesday 30/5/2017 stressed the importance of facing and eliminating any threat to the stability of Egypt. The president made the remarks in a meeting with Prime Minister Sherif Ismail and Governor of the Central Bank of Egypt (CBE) Tarek Amer as well as the ministers of defense, military production, foreign affairs, interior, justice, finance, supply, internal trade and agriculture.

More Details:

<http://www.sis.gov.eg/Story/113262?lang=en-us>

- **Egypt: 3 officers, 1 soldier dead in western desert**

Egypt's military says that three officers and one soldier were killed when a suicide belt went off as forces were sweeping a militant hub in the Bahariya Oasis in Egypt's western desert. Military spokesperson Tamer el-Refaie said on his Facebook page Wednesday that the incident took place during ongoing military operations in the western desert bordering Libya.

More Details:

https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle_east/egypt-3-officers-1-soldier-dead-in-western-desert/2017/05/31/adf220ca-4627-11e7-8de1-cec59a9bf4b1_story.html?utm_term=.f88b5d4be07f

- **Sudan accuses Egypt of arming rebels**

The Sudanese Ministry of Defence (MoD) reasserted an earlier claim that Cairo is arming rebels in the country on 31 May, when it posted photographs on its Facebook page of what it said were Egyptian-supplied armoured vehicles captured from rebels in the Darfur region. The photographs showed at least four Cougar light armoured vehicles in El-Fasher, the capital of North Darfur. Based on a Toyota Land Cruiser chassis, the Cougar is promoted by both the Streit Group and Ukraine's AutoKrAZ.

More Details:

<http://www.janes.com/article/70986/sudan-accuses-egypt-of-arming-rebels>

- **Egypt Raises \$7BN in London in First Half of 2017**

London Stock Exchange welcomes Egypt's return to London's debt capital markets, opening up its existing London-listed \$4 billion multi-tranche bond to new investors through a tap issue. The tap issue raised \$3 billion, \$750 million in 5, \$1 billion in 10 and \$1.25 billion in 30 year notes. The additional notes started trading on London Stock Exchange today. Funding will support Egypt in financing its long term economic reform programme.

More Details:

<http://www.finchchannel.com/business/financial-markets-and-stocks/65251-egypt-raises-7bn-in-london-in-first-half-of-2017>

- **Egypt's National Press Authority announces new leadership of state-owned newspapers**

The head of Egypt's newly-formed National Press Authority, Karam Gabr, announced new leadership appointments in state-owned newspapers at a press conference on Wednesday. The newly-elected head of the Journalists Syndicate, Abdel Mohsen Salama, is to be the head of Al-Ahram's board of directors, and former chief-editor of Al-Ahram Al-Misaey Alaa Thabet publication the new head of Al-

Ahram. Thabet submitted his resignation from the National Press Authority (NPA) on Wednesday to avoid a potential conflict of interest.

More Details:

<https://www.madamasr.com/en/2017/05/31/news/u/egypts-national-press-authority-announces-new-leadership-of-state-owned-newspapers/>

- **Egypt: Blocked News Sites Threaten to Protest at Press Syndicate**

A number of staff from local media outlets whose websites were blocked in Egypt held a meeting at Al-Bedaiah newspaper headquarters Tuesday to decide on how to escalate against the measures taken by an anonymous state authority to block online access to 21 local and Arab news websites. According to a statement released following the meeting, representatives from Daily News Egypt, Al-Borsa, Moheet, Al-Mesryoon and Mada Masr were present. It was decided that a press conference will be held at the Press Syndicate at noon on Wednesday to discuss the impact and consequences of this censorship, the statement read.

More Details:

<http://www.albawaba.com/news/egypt-blocked-news-sites-threaten-protest-press-syndicate-981020>

8. NORTH AFRICA

Tunisia: Protesters demand more jobs and higher investment

Protesters in southern Tunisia are becoming impatient over stalled negotiations with the government over jobs in the oil industry and more money spent on development. A demonstrator was killed last week when security forces fired teargas to disperse crowds. Al Jazeera's Hoda Abdel-Hamid reports from Kamour, in the southern Tataouine province.

More Detail:

<http://www.aljazeera.com/video/news/2017/05/tunisia-protesters-demand-jobs-higher-investment-170531174315637.html>

- **Human Rights Watchdogs Urge Algeria to Ensure Fair Trial for Amazigh Activists**

Several international human rights watchdogs, including Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, EuroMed Rights, and Front Line Defenders have called on Algerian authorities to drop all charges against a leading activist and his 40 co-defendants, charges based on their peaceful activism for the rights of the Amazigh minority. The NGOs have also condemned strongly Algeria's discrimination against the Amazigh (Berber) minority and called for dropping all charges against

Kamaleddine Fekha and his co-accused, in detention since 2015, stressing that “all the detainees are entitled to a trial within a reasonable time.”

More Details:

<http://me-confidential.com/16023-human-rights-watchdogs-urge-algeria-to-ensure-fair-trial-for-amazigh-activists.html>

- **Algeria Explores New E&P Frontiers**

Algeria has focused its exploration efforts in the south since oil and gas was discovered in the country in 1956. Algeria holds the third-largest amount of proved crude oil reserves in Africa, all of which are onshore because there has been limited offshore exploration. According to Sonatrach, about two-thirds of Algeria’s territory remains largely underexplored or unexplored. Algeria held an estimated 12.2 billion barrels (Bbbl) of proved crude oil reserves, a figure that has been unchanged for many years.

More Detail:

<http://www.epmag.com/algeria-explores-new-ep-frontiers-1606691>

- **Putting one more piece in the global poverty puzzle: the case of Algeria**

The World Bank Group (WBG) has clear goals to end poverty by 2030 and to promote shared prosperity in every country, both of which guide our operations, analysis, and policy advice. In setting these ambitious goals, it is not surprising to note that the WBG has made the measurement of extreme poverty an explicit corporate goal and has taken up a commitment to undertake a close and reliable monitoring. However, we face a seemingly simple, yet important barrier when it comes to measuring the world’s progress on these efforts, - and that is a broad availability of comparable estimates.

More Detail:

<http://blogs.worldbank.org/arabvoices/global-poverty-puzzle-case-algeria>

- **Libya continues to be a global terror threat**

The attack on Manchester Arena, claimed by Daesh, is the deadliest to have hit Britain since the 7/7 bombings and, what’s more, it targeted children and teenagers. It is reported that the perpetrator, Salman Abedi, had recently returned from a three-week stay in Libya, where his parents now reside. While Abedi might represent a new terrorist profile — a UK national with possible connections to broader terrorist networks based in Libya — his attack is part of a larger trend that has confronted Europe since 2012.

More Detail:

<http://gulfnews.com/opinion/thinkers/libya-continues-to-be-a-global-terror-threat-1.2036266>

- **Libya's Biggest Oil Field Boosts Production, Raising the Country's Output**

Libya's biggest oil field boosted production, allowing the OPEC nation to pump crude at the highest level since October 2014. Crude from Sharara field rose by 25,000 barrels a day to 250,000 barrels, according to a person with direct knowledge of the matter who asked not to be identified because they aren't authorized to speak to the media. Libya's output rose to 827,000 barrels a day after the increase in output from Sharara, Mustafa Sanalla, head of the state-run National Oil Corp., said in a text message.

More Details:

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2017-05-31/libya-biggest-oil-field-recovery-boosts-opec-country-s-output>

- **Libyan coast guard accused of endangering refugee lives**

Libya's Coast Guard stands accused by search and rescue organisations of reckless behaviour and endangering the lives of desperate African refugees trying to reach Europe from the North African country. The accusations come as two United Nations agencies on Tuesday pledged to "go the extra mile" in supporting migrants, refugees, asylum seekers and Libyans affected by Libya's ongoing conflict. "A series of incidents caught on camera appear to show Libyan ships trying to prevent refugees being pulled from the water. Refugees also say they've been robbed and shot at by Libyan forces," Al Jazeera reported.

More Details:

<http://www.enca.com/africa/libyan-coast-guard-accused-of-endangering-refugee-lives>

- **Morocco: MPs blast 'lack of debate' over ongoing unrest**

Moroccan MPs on Tuesday criticized both the government and the opposition for what they described as the "absence of parliamentary debate" over a recent wave of social unrest in the country's north. Over the last three days alone, 40 activists were arrested in the northern Al-Rif region for taking part in what some government officials have described as an "armed insurrection". Since last October, Morocco's Al-Rif region — especially the city of Hoceima — has been plagued by intermittent protests by local youth demanding more job opportunities and an end to perceived government corruption. During a demonstration on Sunday, the authorities arrested Nasser Zefzafi, the head of Morocco's opposition Hirak movement, along with 22 other activists.

More Details:

<http://muslimnews.co.uk/news/africa/morocco-mps-blast-lack-of-debate-over-ongoing-unrest/>

- **Thousands rally in Morocco for release of protest leader**

Several thousand people took to the streets in Morocco after dark on Tuesday to demand the release of the leader of months of protests in the neglected northern Rif region. The region has been shaken by social unrest since the death in October of fishmonger Mouhcine Fikri, 31, who was crushed in a rubbish truck in the fishing port of Al-Hoceima as he protested against the seizure of swordfish caught out of season.

More Details:

<http://www.arabtimesonline.com/news/thousands-rally-morocco-release-protest-leader/>

- **Morocco confirms participation in OIC Summit in Astana**

Special envoy of the President – Deputy Foreign Minister of the Republic of Kazakhstan Akylbek Kamaldinov paid a working visit to the Kingdom of Morocco, the Kazakh foreign ministry said. During the visit, the Special Envoy met with Foreign Minister of Morocco Nasser Bourita for discussing ways to enhance bilateral cooperation in the political, economic, investment and cultural spheres, as well as the state and prospects for cooperation between the two countries within the framework of international organizations.

More Details:

<http://akipress.com/news:593095/>

9. AFGHANISTAN – PAKISTAN

- **Trump Speaks with Ghani, Condemns Kabul Attack**

The United States President, Donald Trump condemned the terrorist attack in Kabul, which took place on Wednesday and left at least 90 people dead. The United States president has spoken with Ashraf Ghani and condemned the terrorist attack in Kabul, describing it as ‘barbaric’.

More Details:

<http://ariananews.af/trump-speaks-with-ghani-condemns-kabul-attack/>

- **Suicide Attacker Kills Soldier near Airport in Eastern Afghanistan**

One more soldier was reportedly injured by the explosion, the TOLONews media outlet reported, citing a spokesman for the Nangarhar governor, Attaullah Khoghyani. Further details of the incident remain unknown. The incident occurred just a day after a huge blast hit the Afghan capital of Kabul killing up to 90 people and injuring hundreds more. Daesh reportedly claimed responsibility for the attack.

More Details:

<https://sputniknews.com/middleeast/201706011054182781-afghanistan-bomber-airport-soldier/>

- **11 US Citizens Suffer Injuries in Kabul Bombing**

At least 11 U.S. citizens were injured in a massive explosion in the diplomatic and government area of Kabul, Afghanistan, the US State Department has said. "Eleven U.S. citizen contract personnel were injured in the attack in Kabul," a State Department official said. "None of their injuries appear to be life-threatening."

More Details:

<http://www.pajhwok.com/en/2017/06/01/11-us-citizens-suffer-injuries-kabul-bombing>

- **Haqqani Network Blamed for Afghan Blast**

Afghanistan's spy agency has blamed the insurgent group Haqqani network and neighbouring Pakistan for the massive truck bombing that killed around 90 people in Kabul. "The plan for (the) attack was drawn up by the Haqqani network with direct coordination and cooperation from Pakistan's Inter Services Intelligence (ISI)," the National Directorate of Security said in a statement late on Wednesday.

More Details:

<http://www.sbs.com.au/news/article/2017/06/01/haqqani-network-blamed-afghan-blast>

- **Wazir Akbar Khan Hospital Stretched To Its Limits**

Strained to capacity following Wednesday's truck bombing, Wazir Akbar Khan hospital was at one stage having to put two people in a bed, but according to patients, the staff treated the wounded really well. Wazir Akbar Khan hospital, which is just over 1km away from the blast site took in over 100 of the wounded in the hours that followed the blast.

More Details:

<http://www.tolonews.com/afghanistan/wazir-akbar-khan-hospital-stretched-its-limits>

- **Parliament's Joint Session to Be Held Today**

President Mamnoon Hussain will be addressing a joint session of Parliament today to mark the beginning of the new parliamentary year. The session is likely to commence shortly and will mark the start of the ruling party's last year in government. The address by the president — his fourth since the government was formed in 2013 — is part of the parliamentary tradition.

More Details:

<https://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2017/06/01/parliaments-joint-session-to-be-held-today/>

- **Turkey, Pakistan Establishing Energy Cooperation**

Turkey has ratified the agreement on energy cooperation with Pakistan, says a message posted on the website of Turkey's Resmi Gazete (Official newspaper). The agreement between Turkey and Pakistan was signed in Ankara on September 13, 2013. Under the document, the two countries plan to jointly produce iron ore, as well as build thermal power plants.

More Details:

<http://en.trend.az/business/energy/2761306.html>

- **Fire at Pakistani Pilgrims Bus in Iran, All Passengers Safe**

A bus carrying 42 visiting Pakistani pilgrims caught fire on Wednesday 150 km from the provincial capital city of Mashad but none of the passengers was hurt in the incident. According to a local police officer, "The incident happened at 6:00 pm local time (13:30 GMT) when the Volvo bus leaving Mashad for Mirjaveh border point near Pakistan caught fire in the Torbat Heidariyed-Ganaveh road.

More Details:

<http://www.irna.ir/en/News/82551611/>

- **Jammu and Kashmir: Indian Army Kills Five Pakistani Soldiers in LoC Strike**

The Indian Army's Special Forces in Kashmir on Wednesday eliminated a Pakistani Border Action Team (BAT) of five enemy soldiers, a government official said. The offensive was conducted along the Line of Control in the Muzaffarabad sector by the Army's Para (Special Forces), the official said on condition of anonymity. BAT is a special Pakistani army unit conducting cross-border operations.

More Details:

<http://www.livemint.com/Politics/GXNeTxBJFbij9Y7yshCNVP/Indian-Army-kills-five-Pakistani-soldiers-in-LoC-strike.html>

- **Pak's Civil-Military Leadership Condemns Violence in Kashmir**

Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif today chaired a high-level meeting to discuss key security issues with civilian and military officials, who condemned the "atrocities" by Indian forces in Kashmir. During the National Security Committee meeting at the PM Office, the civilian and military leadership also voiced "moral and diplomatic" support for the Kashmiri people.

More Details:

<http://www.dnaindia.com/india/report-pak-s-civil-military-leadership-condemns-violence-in-kashmir-2457116>

10.TURKEY AND THE MIDDLE EAST

- **Turkey interrogates suspected senior ISIL leader**

A suspected senior ISIL leader, who was arrested Tuesday by Istanbul police's anti-terror branch, has been interrogated in northwestern Sakarya province Wednesday. Halis Bayancuk, who is also known as Abu Hanzala, was arrested in Istanbul, as part of the investigation carried out by Sakarya Chief Public Prosecutor's Office against the militant group, according to a source.

More Details:

<http://www.worldbulletin.net/turkey/190267/turkey-warns-against-supporting-pkk-and-affiliates>

- **Turkey dispatches emergency food aid to Yemen's Taiz**

Five hundred food packages were delivered to the Yemeni city of Taiz on Wednesday by Turkey's Diyanet Foundation, according to Yemen's official SABA news agency. The Association for Improvement and Favor, a local charity, has been tasked with distributing the aid to the city's poor. Speaking to Anadolu Agency, association chairman Abdulkareem Shaaban voiced his appreciation for the desperately-needed Turkish largesse.

More Details:

<http://aa.com.tr/en/africa/turkey-dispatches-emergency-food-aid-to-yemen-s-taiz/831957>

- **Support for PKK/YPG/PYD not befitting of alliance with Turkey, Security Council says**

Turkey's top security body, the National Security Council (MGK) said Wednesday that support and assistance given by allies to the PKK terrorist group's offshoots is not befitting of an alliance with the country. In a statement released after the meeting, officials said that the meeting focused on Turkey's war on terror.

More Details:

<https://www.dailysabah.com/war-on-terror/2017/05/31/support-for-pkkyppgpyd-not-befitting-of-alliance-with-turkey-security-council-says>

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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