



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

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Peace Process

Barış Süreci

Ethnic and Secterian Groups

Etnik ve Mezhepsel Gruplar

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Devlet-dışı Aktörler

Relations with the West

Batı'yla İlişkiler

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07 APRIL 2017

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1. IRAQ

- **Popular Mobilization Kill 4 Suicide Bombers In Baiji, Clashes Still Going On**

The media of the popular mobilization announced the killing of four suicide bombers in Harariat area in Baiji, Salahuddin province. "The 42nd Brigade in the popular mobilization forces repulsed an attack to Daesh on Harariat area of Baiji and killed four suicide bombers," a statement said.

More Details:

http://www.ninanews.com/News_Details.aspx?DdQ0ZHta3dptwCqtefzeEw%253d%253d

- **Peshmerga ministry seeking to expand Erbil-Washington protocol: Official**

An official from the Kurdistan Region Peshmerga Ministry stated that the latest visit of the US delegation to Erbil had a major impact on the Washington-Erbil relations. Halgurd Hikmat, head of the Peshmerga Ministry's Media Department, told BasNews that the aim behind the US delegation's visit to Kurdistan Region was for the new administration to be closely enlightened about the latest developments on the ground, especially the anti-Islamic State (IS) efforts.

More Details:

<http://www.iraqinews.com/baghdad-politics/peshmerga-ministry-seeking-expand-erbil-washington-protocol-official/>

- **KDP-PUK Prioritized Independence Referendum over Normalizing Internal Situation: KDP Leader**

Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) politburos have given priority to holding the independence referendum in the Kurdistan Region over settling the internal situation, said a KDP politburo member. Addressing a press conference after meeting with the Kurdistan Islamic Movement (KIM), Rozh Nuri Shawes said that bringing Kurdistan to its normal phase [void of current political and economic crises] and holding a referendum are important factors as they are related to the current and future statue of Kurds.

More Details:

<http://www.basnews.com/index.php/en/news/kurdistan/341363>

- **Two Iraqi pilots killed when helicopter shot down over Mosul by Islamic State**

Two Iraqi army pilots were killed on Thursday when their helicopter was shot down over the city of Mosul by Islamic State, according to a military statement. The helicopter was providing air support to Federal Police forces battling Islamic State fighters on the western side of Mosul, the statement said.

It is the first aircraft downed by Islamic State over Mosul since the start of the U.S.-backed offensive on the northern Iraqi city, in October. Mosul is Islamic State's last major city stronghold in Iraq.

More Details:

http://www.shafaaq.com/en/En_NewsReader/5c0a9951-ded7-4e37-b8e9-ab317da92a11/Two-Iraqi-pilots-killed-when-helicopter-shot-down-over-Mosul-by-Islamic-State

- **Kurdistan Region delegation concluded a positive meeting with al-Hakim**

Kurdistan Region delegation had concluded their meeting with Amar al-Hakim, Head of National Alliance, after the meeting Mr. Adnan al-Mufti member of the delegation and Mr, Ali al-Alaq member of the Alliance had a press conference , stating that the meeting was positive and addressed the problems very honestly. Al-Mufti said that Kurdistan Region delegation had stressed during the meeting on the importance to implement the constitutional article 140, they also addressed the Iraqi Parliament's resent decision to down the flag of Kurdistan from Kirkuk province and its governmental buildings.

More Details:

http://www.pukmedia.com/EN/EN_Direje.aspx?Jimare=40149

- **Salahuddin governor reveals circumstances behind recent attack in Tikrit**

Governor of Salahuddin province Ahmed Abdullah al-Jabouri on Friday spoke about the terrorist attacks that the city of Tikrit has witnessed days ago. He said that the security forces killed six suicide bombers before the seventh blows him up, killing three civilians. "Seven suicide bombers wearing military uniforms infiltrated from Hawija to the villages of Mazra and Albu-Tohma in the north of Tikrit," Jubouri said. "Three of them entered the village of Mazra'a and the other four headed to the village of al-Bawtama.

More Details:

<http://www.thebaghdadpost.com/en/story/9056/Salahuddin-governor-reveals-circumstances-behind-recent-attack-in-Tikrit>

- **40 Iraqi soldiers killed by 5 ISIS suicide bombings near Baiji**

The Islamic State unleashed a series of hit-and-run attacks on Iraqi outposts and checkpoints on the outskirts of Baiji beginning on Thursday morning in a seeming bid to divert government troops from their offensive in Mosul. Spearheaded by an astonishing five suicide bombers, ISIS insurgents infiltrated a number of Iraqi-held points north and west of Baiji, an Iraqi Army stronghold on the Tigris River.

More Details:

<https://www.almasdarnews.com/article/40-iraqi-soldiers-killed-5-isis-suicide-bombings-near-baiji-18-graphic-pictures-video/>

- **Corruption, deceit plague private education in Iraq**

It's said that some college degrees aren't worth the paper they're printed on. Some graduates in Iraq are finding that to be true. Others can't even get the paper. Dozens of students protested March 8 in front of the private Mazaya College, calling on the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research to accredit their university and issue diplomas.

More Details:

<http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2017/04/iraq-education-private-universities.html>

- **Politics in Iraq over the Kurdistan Flag**

Last week your humble columnist sang the praises of Iraqi Prime Minister Haidar al-Abadi. The ink in his column hardly had the chance to dry, when Mr. Abadi gave an interview with Rudaw in which, on several issues, he sounded remarkably like past Iraqi Prime Ministers. Perhaps your humble columnist will never be disappointed in his ability to be disappointed.

More Details:

<http://www.rudaw.net/english/opinion/060420171>

- **ISIS executes three civilians in Iraq's Hawija**

A source told the Iraqi media that the executions took place in an ISIS military base near the northern Iraqi town of Hawija. The bodies of the victims were later delivered to their families, the source added. Hawija has been under the control of the extremist group since early 2014. The town is located in west of Kirkuk.

More Details:

http://en.abna24.com/news/middle-east/isis-executes-three-civilians-in-iraqs-hawija_822266.html

- **Egypt oil ministry delegation to visit Iraq soon to sign import deal -ambassador**

An Egyptian delegation will visit Iraq soon to sign a deal for Egypt to import crude oil from Iraq which will include a 90-day grace period for payment, the Iraqi ambassador to Egypt Habib El-Sadr told Reuters on Thursday.

More Details:

http://af.reuters.com/article/egyptNews/idAFC6N1BK02C?feedType=RSS&feedName=egyptNews&utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+reuters%2FAfricaEgyptNews+%28News+%2F+Africa+%2F+Egypt+News%29&&rpc=401

2. SYRIA

- **America attacks Syria**

After Bashar al-Assad killed over 80 Syrian civilians in a nerve-gas attack on April 4th, Donald Trump blamed his predecessor. Had Barack Obama made good on his threat to punish the Syrian dictator after his earlier use of chemical weapons, Mr Trump argued, Mr Assad would not have dared to reoffend. It followed that Mr Trump would have to do differently. Sure enough, on April 6th America fired 59 cruise missiles at the airbase in central Syria from which it claimed Mr Assad's atrocity was launched.

More details:

<http://www.economist.com/blogs/democracyinamerica/2017/04/overdue-reprisal>

- **'Negative consequences': Russia warns US over possible military action in Syria**

Russia warned the US that there could be "negative consequences" if Washington takes military action against Syria. "All responsibility if military action occurs will be on the shoulders of those who initiated such a doubtful tragic enterprise," Russian Ambassador Vladimir Safronkov told reporters following a closed-door Security Council meeting on Syria.

More details:

<http://www.9news.com.au/world/2017/04/07/11/02/russia-at-un-warns-us-over-possible-military-action-in-syria>

- **Asian Stocks Mixed On Missile Strikes on Syria, Risk Sentiment Grows**

Asian shares traded mixed on Friday after the U.S. fired missiles into Syria in response to a chemical weapons attack in the country that President Donald Trump laid at the hands of President Bashar al-Assad's forces.

More details:

<https://seekingalpha.com/article/4060974-asian-stocks-mixed-missile-strikes-syria-risk-sentiment-grows>

- **Chemical weapons attack in Syria**

Truth is the first casualty in every conflict, and this was illustrated again in the incident involving use of deadly chemical weapons in Syria's Khan Sheikhoun area, in which an airstrike by the Syrian Air Force killed 72 people, including many children.

More details:

http://www.china.org.cn/opinion/2017-04/07/content_40576946.htm

- **Russia condemns U.S. missile strike on Syria**

"President [Vladimir] Putin considers the American strikes against Syria an aggression against a sovereign government in violations of the norms of international law, and under a false pretext," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters.

More details:

https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/europe/russia-condemns-us-missile-strike-on-syria/2017/04/07/c81ea12a-1b4e-11e7-8003-f55b4c1cfae2_story.html?utm_term=.fee7fe09bba5

- **Poland Supports US Actions on Syria**

Polish government supported a US air strike on a Syrian airfield, a cabinet spokesman said on Friday. "The United States for sure is a guarantor of world peace and order. And there are situations when you need to react, situations when you need to take actual action," spokesman Rafal Bochenek told state television TVP Info.

More details:

<http://www.jpost.com/Breaking-News/Poland-supports-US-actions-on-Syria-486414>

- **Turkey has welcomed the U.S. missile strike on Syria**

Turkey has welcomed the U.S. missile strike on Syria, saying it was an "important and meaningful" development but called for a continued tough stance against President Bashar Assad that would render him "no longer able to harm his people."

More details:

http://hosted.ap.org/dynamic/stories/M/ML_SYRIA_THE_LATEST?SITE=AP&SECTION=HOME&TEMPLATE=DEFAULT&CTIME=2017-04-07-02-39-07

- **Gas prices may jump at the pump after Syria airstrike**

Oil prices hit a one-month high on Friday after the United States fired missiles at a Syrian government airbase, sending shockwaves through global markets and raising concerns that the conflict could spread in the oil-rich region. As of Friday morning, the average per-gallon price for gasoline was \$2.39, or an increase of about one penny from Thursday, according to gas tracking site GasBuddy.

More Details:

<http://www.cbsnews.com/news/gas-prices-may-jump-at-the-pump-after-syria-airstrike/>

- **Kyiv supports U.S. actions in Syria**

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine supports the U.S. actions in Syria to prevent the commission of war crimes in the future, the ministry said in a statement. "The U.S. actions should be supported to prevent new war crimes of the regime, in particular those against the civilian population," the statement says.

More Details:

<http://en.interfax.com.ua/news/general/414529.html>

3. IRAN

- **US strike on Syria: Russia, Iran call missile strikes aggression; Saudi, Israel welcome it**

Two days after Bashar al-Assad regime used chemical weapons on civilians, including many children, in the rebel-held northwestern Syrian town of Khan Sheikhun, the US on Friday responded with missile attacks on a Syrian air base with Tomahawk cruise missiles.

More details:

<http://www.livemint.com/Politics/oDQCXC6w4SbFkWlp34JIZJ/US-strike-on-Syria-Russia-Iran-call-missile-strikes-aggres.html>

- **Iran strongly condemns US missile attack on Syria**

Qasemi underlined that the Islamic Republic of Iran as the biggest victim of chemical weapons in the contemporary history, severely censures any use of chemical weapons, regardless of the perpetrators and victims.

More details:

http://en.abna24.com/news/iran/iran-strongly-condemns-us-missile-attack-on-syria_822390.html

- **US Treasury Grants BP License to Operate North Sea Field with Iran**

Production at the Rhum Field was suspended in 2010 when Europe imposed sanctions on Iran over its nuclear program and only resumed four years later after Britain agreed to set up a temporary management scheme whereby all revenue due to Tehran would be held until sanctions were lifted.

More details:

<http://www.oilandgasinvestor.com/us-treasury-grants-bp-license-operate-north-sea-field-iran-1491596>

- **Clipping Iran's Wings - Winners & Losers from Congress' New Sanctions**

Iran's aviation sector will spend much more time taxiing before takeoff if the Countering Iran's Destabilizing Activities Act Of 2017 becomes law. The bill enjoys bipartisan support in the U.S. Senate, and the House of Representatives is considering a companion bill, the Iran Ballistic Missiles and International Sanctions Enforcement Act, which also enjoys bipartisan support.

More details:

<http://www.zerohedge.com/news/2017-04-06/clipping-irans-wings-winners-losers-congress-new-sanctions>

- **Iran Regime's State-Run Newspaper: No Lock Has Been Unlocked by Rouhani's Key**

The state-run Resalat Newspaper on April 4th in an article stressed on the inconclusive electoral promises addressed by the Iranian President, Hassan Rouhani after 4 years of power.

More details:

<http://www.ncr-iran.org/en/news/economy/22480-iran-regime-s-state-run-newspaper-no-lock-has-been-unlocked-by-rouhani-s-key>

- **Iran Expecting \$50b in Foreign Finance**

After the implementation of Iran's nuclear accord with world powers, the country has negotiated its way to attract \$50 billion worth of foreign finance expected to flow into the country soon, a report by Economy Ministry's Organization for Investment, Economic and Technical Assistance of Iran has revealed.

More details:

<https://financialtribune.com/articles/economy-business-and-markets/61905/iran-expecting-50b-in-foreign-finance>

- **Iran retaliates to Indian oil cut plans**

Iran has cut by one-third the time it gives to Indian refiners to pay for oil they buy from it and has also raised ship freight rates as a retaliatory measure to New Delhi's decision to reduce Iranian oil imports.

More details:

<http://www.financialexpress.com/industry/iran-retaliates-to-indian-oil-cut-plans/619040/>

- **Spokesman rejects reports on exit of Iranian diplomats from Syria**

Foreign Ministry spokesman Bahram Qasemi dismissed reports on exit of Iranian diplomats from Syria following the US missile attack on this Arab country. Talking to reporters, Qasemi said the foreign media reports on exit of Iranian diplomats and their families from Syria are 'sheer lies'.

More Details:

<http://www.irna.ir/en/News/82484817/>

- **Ample Potential to Boost Iran-Singapore Coop.**

Deputy Foreign Minister Morteza Sarmadi highlighted the opportunities for trade ties with Singapore, saying the Southeast Asian country's companies are welcome to invest in Iran's energy sector.

More details:

<https://financialtribune.com/articles/national/61896/ample-potential-to-boost-iran-singapore-coop>

- **Yemen: Two years of confronting Iran**

The seizure of the capital Sanaa by the Houthis and former President Ali Abdullah Saleh was the end of Yemenis' peaceful uprising and the beginning of the war. Back then, I had no doubt it would be long and harsh, because Saleh still had control over the armed forces, the Houthis receive instructions from Iran, and central authority in Yemen is absent.

More details:

<http://www.arabnews.com/node/1080351>

4. ISRAEL – PALESTINE

- **Russia will recognize W Jerusalem as Israel's capital only if E Jerusalem becomes Palestine's**

In a diplomatic missive endorsing the two-state solution, Moscow has said that it is ready to recognize West Jerusalem as Israel's official capital, providing that statehood is granted to Palestinians, who will base their capital in the eastern part of the city.

More Details

<https://www.rt.com/news/383777-israel-russia-capital-jerusalem/>

- **Israeli soldier killed in West Bank vehicle attack; Remains of Jordan soldiers from 1967 war returned**

A Palestinian rammed his vehicle into a group of people near a West Bank settlement on Thursday, killing an Israeli soldier and wounding another, the military said. The military said the Palestinian was apprehended after the attack near the Ofra settlement. Rescue services said the slain Israeli soldier was 20 years old. The wounded soldier was evacuated to hospital for treatment.

More Details

<http://www.arabnews.com/node/1080461/middle-east>

- **Palestinian disconnect**

Less than 24 hours after the conclusion of the Arab Summit at the Dead Sea, Jordan, and assertions by Palestinian Foreign Minister Riad Al-Malki on the importance of the resolutions adopted at the summit and how they covered all aspects of the Palestinian cause and are acceptable to the Palestinians, Israel's security cabinet approved the construction of the new settlements in the West Bank, occupied 20 years ago. This comes at a time when Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu is negotiating with Washington about possible restrictions on settlement building.

More Details

<http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/News/20132.aspx>

- **Palestinian Arrested After Driving Into Israeli Soldiers**

Israeli occupation forces apprehended a Palestinian yesterday after he drove his car into Israeli soldiers near the illegal West Bank Jewish settlement of Ofra, killing one and injuring another. Israeli media said the Israelis were standing near a bus stop at the time.

More Details

<http://www.morningstaronline.co.uk/a-c779-Palestinian-arrested-afrer-driving-into-Israeli-soldiers#.WOCxCdLyhac>

- **Israeli Court Sentences Two Palestinian Children from Jerusalem to House Arrest, Imposes Fines**

An Israeli court in occupied Jerusalem sentenced two Palestinian children, only 12 and 14 years of age, from Silwan town, south of the Al-Aqsa Mosque, in the occupied city, to house arrest and imposed high fines on them.

More Details

<http://imemc.org/article/israeli-court-sentences-two-palestinian-children-from-jerusalem-to-house-arrest-imposes-fines/>

- **Jewish student organization stages small rally outside of Rutgers Hillel**

Members of IfNotNow, a division of young Jewish members, met outside the steps of the new Rutgers Hillel building this past Thursday night to protest the institution's stance on the Israeli occupation of the West Banks and Gaza. An estimated 10 students attended the rally.

More Details

<http://www.dailytargum.com/article/2017/04/jewish-student-organization-stages-rally-outside-of-rutgers-hillel>

- **Palestinians Exploiting Children to Fight Israel**

The new Palestinian curriculum for grades 1 to 4 “is significantly more radical than previous curricula,” concludes a new study by Hebrew University’s Institute for Monitoring Peace and Cultural Tolerance in School Education (IMPACT-se). It “teaches students to be martyrs, demonizes and denies the existence of Israel, and focuses on a ‘return’ to an exclusively Palestinian homeland.”

More Details

<http://www.frontpagemag.com/fpm/266353/palestinians-exploiting-children-fight-israel-noah-beck>

- **Hamas Executes Three Men Accused of Collaborating with Israel**

Hamas on Thursday executed three men it accused of collaborating with the Israeli authorities, few days after launching “redemption week”, during which the movement asked Israeli “agents” to turn themselves in or face punishment. The Hamas-run Interior Ministry said in a statement that the three men have been executed in Gaza. The Palestinians – aged 32, 42 and 55 – were hanged after being convicted by a court of treason and conspiring with foreign parties, the statement added.

More Details

<http://english.aawsat.com/kafah/news-middle-east/hamas-executes-three-men-accused-collaborating-israel>

- **Trump's regional priorities**

One day after Arab leaders, gathered in Jordan, recommitted themselves to the 2002 Arab Peace Initiative and to a comprehensive political deal between Israel and the Palestinians, while rejecting Israel's unilateral actions in East Jerusalem and the West Bank, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu responded by giving the go ahead to build a new "official" settlement near Nablus.

More Details

<http://www.arabnews.com/node/1080406>

- **How Israel understands the Arab Peace Initiative**

Once more, the Arab Peace Initiative of 2002 is taking centre stage. Palestinian Authority (PA) President Mahmoud Abbas insisted during his speech before the recently-concluded Arab League Summit in Jordan, that the initiative is the only solution on the table; asserting that it will not be changed or even tweaked.

More Details

<http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/News/20122.aspx>

5. JORDAN and LEBANON

- **Israel-Lebanon tension heats up over Iran's presence in Middle East**

Israel is concerned over Iran's growing influence in the Middle East, particularly in Syria and Lebanon. Given the recent escalation of tensions between the two countries, Israel may target Tehran's proxy, the Lebanon-based Shiite militant group, Hezbollah.

More Details

<https://www.dailysabah.com/mideast/2017/04/07/israel-lebanon-tension-heats-up-over-irans-presence-in-middle-east>

- **Why Israel and Hezbollah are heading for a new, devastating war in the**

Long-range Iranian or Syrian missiles, as it is anticipated, would mainly be handled by the US-backed Arrow system at high altitudes; smaller, but nevertheless extremely accurate, missiles from

Hezbollah in Lebanon or Syria would be the domain of the US-backed David's Sling, while drones, artillery and smaller rockets will continue to be dealt with by the (also US-backed) Iron Dome.

More Details

<http://www.independent.co.uk/voices/new-war-middle-east-israel-hezbollah-lebanon-iran-syria-donald-trump-us-administration-conflict-a7670126.html>

- **Hariri calls Obama's retraction of 'red line' a 'crime against Syria and its people'**

Lebanon Prime Minister Saad Hariri criticized on Thursday former US president Barack Obama for failing to enforce his own "red line" in 2013 over the use of chemical weapons in Syria.

More Details

<http://yalibnan.com/2017/04/07/hariri-calls-obamas-retraction-of-red-line-a-crime-against-syria-and-its-people/>

- **King Abdullah: Compromise with Russia on Crimea to get its help in Syria**

Just before his first official White House meeting with President Trump on Wednesday, King Abdullah II of Jordan spoke to The Washington Post's Lally Weymouth about the key role he expects to play with the president in reviving the stalled Israeli-Palestinian peace talks.

More Details

https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/king-abdullah-compromise-with-russia-on-crimea-to-get-its-help-in-syria/2017/04/06/b985b894-1a61-11e7-bcc2-7d1a0973e7b2_story.html?utm_term=.4b83df3d777a

- **Trump's budget cuts Threaten Jordan's role in defeating ISIS**

Jordan's King Abdullah had his second meeting with President Donald Trump during the administration's first 100 days this week. It is a sign not only of the king's stature, but also of Jordan's importance to American interests in the region.

More Details

http://www.newsweek.com/trumps-budget-cuts-threaten-jordans-role-defeating-isis-580068?piiano_t=1

- **Belt and Road Initiative important to Lebanon**

Lebanon's Prime Minister Saad Hariri said Thursday that the Belt and Road Initiative could lead his country down the road of "hope, stabilization and development."

More Details

http://www.china.org.cn/world/2017-04/07/content_40573224.htm

- **The Syrian question in Lebanon**

Lebanese Prime Minister Saad Al-Hariri recently issued an urgent and alarming appeal in connection with the impact of Syrian refugees in Lebanon. He warned that his country was approaching the “point of collapse” due to the pressures of hosting 1.5 million Syrian refugees and that tensions between them and Lebanese could erupt into turmoil.

More Details

<http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/News/20136.aspx>

- **Kabbani: Parliamentary Vacuum means end of current Political regime**

MP Mohammad Kabbani said on Thursday at the evening plenary session held that vacuum at the level of the Parliament meant the end of the current political regime.

More Details

<http://nna-leb.gov.lb/en/show-news/77718/Kabbani-Parliamentary-vacuum-means-end-of-current-political-regime>

- **Hariri at the Opening of the Silk Road conference: Investing in Lebanon is preparing for the Massive Reconstruction of Syria**

This is the speech delivered by the President of the Council of Ministers Saad Hariri this morning during the opening of the Silk Road Conference "One Belt One Road in Lebanon" organized by Fransabank Group and the Silk Road Chamber for International Commerce at the Adnan Kassar building for Arab economy.

More Details

<http://nna-leb.gov.lb/en/show-news/77667/Hariri-at-the-opening-of-the-Silk-Road-Conference-Investing-in-Lebanon-is-preparing-for-the-massive-reconstruction-of-Syria>

6. ARABIAN PENINSULA AND THE GULF OF BASRA

- **Yemeni Minister of Interior commends Saudi Arabia for leading Arab Coalition to support legitimacy in Yemen**

Yemeni Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior, Major General Hussein Mohammed Arab, praised the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's pioneering position in leading the Arab Coalition to support the legitimate government in confronting coup forces in his country.

More details:

<http://sites.alriyadh.com/en/article/1157763/Yemeni-Minister-of-Interior-commends-Saudi-Arabia-for-leading-Arab-Coalition-to-support-legitimacy-in-Yemen>

- **Saudi Arabia, Iran, others react to US strike in Syria**

Saudi Arabia said it "fully supports" the strikes, adding that it was a "courageous decision" by President Donald Trump in response to the alleged use of chemical weapons against civilians in the town of Khan Sheikhoun, in northwestern Syria. A responsible source at the foreign ministry expressed the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's full support for the American military operations on military targets in Syria, which came as a response to the Syrian regime's use of chemical weapons against innocent civilians," a statement carried by state news agency SPA said.

More details:

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/04/saudi-arabia-iran-react-strike-syria-170407054521418.html>

- **Saudi Arabia deports accused in main ISIS case**

Saudi Arabia has deported Ayan Khan Salafi, a resident of Rajasthan, in the main ISIS case relating to the Junood-ul-Khilafa-Fil-Hind that was formed for carrying out subversive activities in India.

More details:

<http://www.newindianexpress.com/world/2017/apr/06/saudi-arabia-deports-accused-in-main-isis-case-1590772.html>

- **Theresa May in Saudi Arabia to secure post-Brexit investment**

British Prime Minister Theresa May held talks with Saudi officials on Tuesday, hoping to tap the oil-rich kingdom's "immense potential" as she looks to secure post-Brexit investment and trade. May has come under harsh criticism over her Saudi visit, facing calls at home to raise rights issues with local leaders.

More details:

<http://www.albawaba.com/news/theresa-may-saudi-arabia-secure-post-brexit-investment-959130>

- **Yemen officials: US Strike Kills 3 Al-Qaida Fighters**

Yemeni tribal and security officials say a suspected U.S. airstrike has killed three al-Qaida operatives, including the brother of the Yemeni affiliate's late leader.

More details on:

http://hosted.ap.org/dynamic/stories/M/ML_YEMEN?SITE=AP&SECTION=HOME&TEMPLATE=DEFAULT&CTIME=2017-04-06-14-58-09

- **The Chairman of the Gulf Research Center: America's Appeasement Policy Ends in Yemen**

The Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, Dr. Abdulaziz Bin Saqr had an interview with Al-Jazeera TV on Tuesday, April 5th. In response to the question about the U.S.'s stance towards Yemen, he stated: "Donald Trump stressed on two issues in his campaign. The first issue was regarding the significance and danger of Iran's ballistic missiles.

More details:

<http://www.ncr-iran.org/en/news/terrorism-fundamentalism/22488-the-chairman-of-the-gulf-research-center-america-s-appeasement-policy-ends-in-yemen>

- **Qatar Airways chief warns on excessive security measures**

The chief executive of a leading Middle Eastern airline says that terrorists targeted by the controversial laptop bans introduced in the US and UK will move to locations where there is less scrutiny of airline passengers. Akbar al-Baker, chief executive of Qatar Airways, which will begin flying from Dublin to the Gulf emirate's capital, Doha, in June, says in an interview with The Irish Times that measures such as the ban are not necessarily "what the travelling public wants".

More details:

<http://www.irishtimes.com/business/transport-and-tourism/qatar-airways-chief-warns-on-excessive-security-measures-1.3039446>

- **Human rights campaigners call on F1 to cancel Bahrain Grand Prix and claim race is attempt to 'whitewash' abuses**

Human rights campaigners have urged Formula One management to cancel next week's Bahrain Grand Prix, accusing the country's rulers of using the race to 'whitewash' abuses and improve their

image abroad. Bahrain's biggest sporting event is watched by a worldwide audience of millions and has been held since 2004, with the exception of 2011 when violent civil unrest forced its cancellation.

More details:

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/sport/formulaone/article-4386990/Human-rights-campaigners-call-F1-cancel-Bahrain-GP.html>

- **Air Liquide signs long-term contract with petroleum group in Oman**

Air Liquide and Oman Oil Refineries and Petroleum Industries Company (Orpic), Oman's national refining company, has signed a long-term agreement for the supply of nitrogen (N2) to the Liwa Plastics Industries Complex (LPIC). The LPIC is a new plastics production complex which includes the country's first steam cracker. Orpic is adding to its existing production facilities, in Sohar industrial port area in Oman.

More details:

<https://www.gasworld.com/air-liquide-signs-contract-with-petroleum-group-in-oman-/2012593.article>

- **Bangladesh PM offers Saudi Arabia support against terror**

Bangladeshi Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina told a senior visiting Saudi delegation on Wednesday that her country would lend maximum support to the Kingdom in the fight against terror, and to spread the message of Islam worldwide.

More details:

<http://www.arabnews.com/node/1080491/saudi-arabia>

7. EGYPT

- **Egypt 'weary' of polarization in UN Security Council over chemical attack on Khan Sheikhoun**

Egypt is "weary" of the polarization which has emerged in the United Nations Security Council in the wake of the recent chemical attack on Khan Sheikhoun, Syria, and the Foreign Ministry's spokesperson announced on Thursday.

More details:

<http://www.madamasr.com/en/2017/04/06/news/u/egypt-weary-of-polarization-in-un-security-council-over-chemical-attack-on-khan-sheikhoun/>

- **IMF supports Egypt's economic reform measures, Lagarde tells Sisi**

The International Monetary Fund's (IMF) managing director Christine Lagarde reiterated the IMF's support for Egypt's economic reform programme following a Washington meeting with Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah El-Sisi on Wednesday.

More details:

<http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/3/12/262432/-.aspx>

- **Egypt negotiating French, multi-national firms for SCZone pharmaceutical investments**

Egypt's General Authority for Suez Canal Economic Zone (SCZone) is negotiating two firms, one from France for pharmaceutical industries, and another multi-national for investment, to invest in the economic zone, its head announced Thursday.

More details:

<http://en.amwalalghad.com/investment-news/industry-trade/56155-egypt-negotiating-french-multi-national-firms-for-sczone-pharmaceutical-investments.html>

- **Egypt's Sissi, meeting Jewish leaders, is optimistic on Israeli-Arab peace**

Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi expressed guarded optimism about peace between Arabs and Israel, but also warned of the threat posed by Islamists, in a meeting with US foreign policy experts that included Jewish organizational officials.

More details:

<http://www.timesofisrael.com/egypts-sissi-meeting-jewish-leaders-is-optimistic-on-israeli-arab-peace/>

- **Trump Expresses Support for Egypt**

President Donald Trump recently welcomed Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi to the White House. Recognizing Egypt as one of the traditional pillars of stability in the Middle East and a reliable U.S. partner, President Trump said, "We are very much behind President al-Sisi. He's done a fantastic job in a very difficult situation. We are very much behind Egypt and the people of Egypt."

More details:

<http://editorials.voa.gov/a/trump-expresses-support-for-egypt/3799697.html>

- **Egypt's Real Estate Tax Authority posts 1.5 billion pounds-revenues in Q3-FY17**

Egypt's Real Estate tax authority (RTA) reached total revenues of 1.5 billion Egyptian pounds (\$83.1 million) during the third quarter of financial year 2016/2017, said chairman Samia Hussein on Wednesday.

More details:

<http://en.amwalalghad.com/business/real-estate/56150-egypts-real-estate-tax-authority-posts-15-billion-pounds-revenues-in-q3-fy17.html>

- **Egypt oil ministry delegation to visit Iraq soon to sign import deal –ambassador**

An Egyptian delegation will visit Iraq soon to sign a deal for Egypt to import crude oil from Iraq which will include a 90-day grace period for payment, the Iraqi ambassador to Egypt Habib El-Sadr told Reuters on Thursday.

More details:

http://af.reuters.com/article/egyptNews/idAFC6N1BK02C?feedType=RSS&feedName=egyptNews&utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+reuters%2FAfricaEgyptNews+%28News+%2F+Africa+%2F+Egypt+News%29&&rpc=401

- **US keen to inject more investments in Egypt: Nasr**

The US stressed its keenness to inject more investments in Egypt in the coming period, according to Minister of Investment and International Cooperation Sahar Nasr. She spoke about the results of President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi's visit to Washington, where he met with US president Donald Trump and the American Chamber of Commerce.

More details:

<http://www.dailynewsegypt.com/2017/04/06/us-keen-inject-investments-egypt-nasr/>

- **Egypt's Sisi 'may use legal powers' in Aya Hegazi case after verdict**

Egypt's President Abdel-Fattah El-Sisi told Fox News on Wednesday that he may use his authority in the case of imprisoned Egyptian-American activist Aya Hegazi, once the court has reached a verdict.

More details:

<https://1israelnews.com/egypts-sisi-may-use-legal-powers-in-aya-hegazi-case-after-verdict/>

- **Egypt is failing to stop the insurgency in Sinai**

Only nine days in, the Egyptian army claimed to have killed 415 militants in Operation “Right of the Martyr”, its campaign against jihadists in the Sinai peninsula that began in September 2015. Since then it has often boasted of killing dozens more in attacks; sometimes over 100. But in February the chief of military intelligence said the army had killed only around 500 in total since the operation began.

More details:

<http://www.economist.com/news/middle-east-and-africa/21720310-other-front-war-against-islamic-state-egypt-failing-stop>

8. NORTH AFRICA

- **East Libya forces fight to seize southern air base**

Forces loyal to Libya's eastern authorities Thursday battled to seize a southern air base, spokesmen for the forces said, as a rival unity government condemned the attack on its forces. "The fighting has not stopped since yesterday" around the Tamenhant air base, said Mohammed Ghoneim, a spokesman for the self-proclaimed Libyan National Army.

More detail:

<http://www.brecorder.com/2017/04/06/342209/east-libya-forces-fight-to-seize-southern-air-base/>

- **Libya’s UN-Backed Government Head Meets with US Officials**

The head of the U.N.-backed Libyan Government of National Accord (GNA) has met in Stuttgart, Germany with top U.S. officials, in hopes of finding a way forward for what one analyst is calling “the Obama administration’s Iraq.”

More detail:

<http://www.voanews.com/a/libya-un-backed-government-head-meets-with-us-officials/3798928.html>

- **Isis kidnapping refugee women, forcing them to convert and selling them as sex slaves in Libya**

Libyan authorities have released 28 Eritreans and seven Nigerians who were captured and enslaved by Isis in Sirte and had been held in detention since the jihadist group lost the city in December.

More detail:

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/africa/isis-refugee-women-kidnap-force-convert-islam-muslim-sex-slaves-sell-libya-eireans-nigerians-sirte-a7670276.html>

- **Morocco: King Mohammed Names New Islamist-Led Coalition Government**

After six months of post-election deadlock, Morocco's King Mohammed VI has named a new cabinet led by the main Islamist party, which lost a key ministry in negotiations with rivals, the state news agency MAP said. The Islamist Justice and Development (PJD) party won elections in October, but the formation of a government was delayed during negotiations with parties who critics say were too close to royalists uneasy with sharing power with Islamists.

More detail:

<http://www.bernama.com/bernama/v8/wn/newsworld.php?id=1345446>

- **PM in Tunisia Meeting**

Tunisian President Beji Caid Essebsi met with HE the Prime Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Abdullah bin Nasser bin Khalifa al-Thani at the presidential palace in Tunis yesterday. The Prime Minister conveyed the greetings of HH the Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani to the Tunisian president as well as his wishes to him and to Tunisian people of further progress and prosperity. ..

More detail:

<http://www.gulf-times.com/story/543348/PM-in-Tunisia-meeting>

- **Egypt eyes 50% rise in chemical industries exports to Morocco by year-end**

Egypt plans to increase its exports of chemical industries to Morocco up to 50 percent by the end of the current year, owing to an ambitious scheme to double exports to Africa. The Egyptian Chemicals and Fertilizers Export Council is targeting around \$140 million in exports to Morocco by the end of 2017, and \$200 million by the end of 2020, said the council's executive director Waleed Azab on Thursday.

More detail:

<http://en.amwalalghad.com/investment-news/industry-trade/56152-egypt-eyes-50-rise-in-chemical-industries-exports-to-morocco-by-year-end.html>

- **Morocco's king approves new government**

King Muhammad VI has approved the country's new government led by a member of the ruling Justice and Development Party (PJD). According to a statement released by the Moroccan Royal Press Office, Prime Minister Saadeddine El Othmani will lead the Cabinet.

More detail:

<http://thepeninsulaqatar.com/article/06/04/2017/Morocco-s-king-approves-new-government>

- **French PSA to open car plant in Algeria ‘this year’: PM**

Algeria is expected to sign a deal with French carmaker PSA to open a plant in the North African country "this year", Algeria's prime minister said Thursday. Abdelmalek Sellal said the project with PSA, which owns the Peugeot, Citroen and DS brands, would "come into being this year" at a press conference with France's Prime Minister Bernard Cazeneuve, who is visiting Algeria

More detail:

<http://dailytimes.com.pk/business/07-Apr-17/french-psa-to-open-car-plant-in-algeria-this-year-pm>

- **Bilateral Dialogue between the United States and Algeria on Security and the Fight against Terrorism**

On April 6, U.S. and Algerian officials met in Washington, D.C. for the fourth annual bilateral dialogue between the United States and Algeria on security and the fight against terrorism. Acting Coordinator for Counterterrorism Justin Siberell led the U.S. delegation, which included officials from the Departments of State, Defense, Justice, Homeland Security, and Treasury. The 17-member Algerian interagency delegation was led by Minister of Maghreb Affairs, the African Union, and the Arab League Abdelkader Messahel.

More detail:

<https://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2017/04/269525.htm>

- **Algeria calls EU to support resolution of refugee crisis**

Algeria has called Thursday in Amman (Jordan) European countries to provide "efficient" assistance and support to address the impact of refugee crisis on host countries. "Algeria calls neighbouring countries of the northern shore of the Mediterranean to financially assist host countries in addressing the consequences of humanitarian and environmental issues induced by refugees," said senator (Council of the Nation) and vice chairman of the committee on energy, environment and water at the Parliamentary Assembly of the Union for the Mediterranean (PA-UfM) Ammar Makhloufi.

More detail:

<http://en.aps.dz/algeria/17644-algeria-calls-eu-to-support-resolution-of-refugee-crisis>

9. AFGHANISTAN – PAKISTAN

- **Pakistan, Germany ink Joint Declaration of Intent**

Pakistan and Germany on Thursday signed a Joint Declaration of Intent with the aim to further strengthen development cooperation between the two countries.

More detail:

<http://nation.com.pk/business/07-Apr-2017/pakistan-germany-ink-joint-declaration-of-intent>

- **Changes in White House to increase pressure on Pakistan: experts**

This week's shake-up in the Trump White House could also lead to greater pressure on Pakistan to create a condition that allows the United States to win the war in Afghanistan, US experts say.

More detail:

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1325413/changes-in-white-house-to-increase-pressure-on-pakistan-experts>

- **Pakistan needs more reforms for high growth: ADB**

Emphasising that continued economic reform is essential to reach a high growth trajectory, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) has asked Pakistan to address key constraints on growth since regulation remains burdensome, requiring more reforms to provide an enabling environment that promotes business and encourages investment.

More detail:

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1325404/pakistan-needs-more-reforms-for-high-growth-adb>

- **Terrorists have no religion: Shehbaz Sharif**

Punjab Chief Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday said that terrorists had no religion and geographical identification, they were only terrorists. He was conversing to elected representatives belonging to different districts who called on him, here.

More detail:

<http://www.brecorder.com/2017/04/06/342245/terrorists-have-no-religion-shehbaz-sharif/>

- **Italian envoy calls on Sindh CM**

A delegation of Italian Ship FREMM led by Italian Ambassador to Pakistan Stefano Pontecoro called on the Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah at Chief Minister House on Thursday.

More detail:

<http://www.brecorder.com/2017/04/06/342235/italian-envoy-calls-on-sindh-cm/>

- **15 ISIS militants killed during Hamza operations in East of Afghanistan**

At least fifteen militants affiliated with the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) terrorist group were killed during the ongoing Hamza military operations in eastern Nangarhar province. According to the local officials, the militants were killed in the past 24 hours in Achin district during the clearance operations and airstrikes.

More detail:

<http://www.khaama.com/15-isis-militants-killed-during-hamza-operations-in-east-of-afghanistan-02524>

- **Daesh Seeks to Control Drug Trafficking in Northern Afghanistan**

Deputy Director of the Russian Foreign Ministry's Department on New Challenges and Threats Dmitry Feoktistov claims that Daesh is looking to gain control over drug trafficking in northern Afghanistan to finance its activities.

More detail:

<https://sputniknews.com/middleeast/201704071052381474-daesh-afghanistan-trafficking/>

- **Most senior Daesh leader killed in Afghanistan**

One of the most senior Daesh terrorist group leaders reportedly has been killed in eastern Nangarhar province of Afghanistan. Syed Omar Bajawari, one of the most senior Daesh terrorist group leaders has been killed in eastern Nangarhar province of Afghanistan, local media reported Wednesday, citing the Defense Ministry.

More detail:

http://en.abna24.com/news/central-asia-subcontinent/most-senior-daesh-leader-killed-in-afghanistan_822305.html

- **2017 goal is to defeat IS in Afghanistan: NATO**

NATO's Resolute Support (RS) mission in Afghanistan on Thursday said their goal in the year 2017 was to defeat Daesh or Islamic State (IS) militants in the conflict-torn country. William Slavin, a spokesman for the US-led RS mission in Afghanistan, told a joint press conference with Afghan Defence Ministry spokesman Dawlat Waziri in Kabul: "We know 2017 will be full of challenges, but we will continue to train, advise and help the Afghans so they are able to stabilize their country."

More detail:

<http://www.pajhwok.com/en/2017/04/06/2017-goal-defeat-afghanistan-nato>

- **Senior Taliban leader arrested in North of Afghanistan**

A senior Taliban leader has been arrested by the Afghan security forces in northern Samangan province of Afghanistan. The Afghan Intelligence, National Directorate of Security (NDS), said the detained Taliban leader has been identified as Mullah Esmatullah who is also famous as Jalali.

More detail:

<http://www.khaama.com/senior-taliban-leader-arrested-in-north-of-afghanistan-02521>

10.TURKEY AND THE MIDDLE EAST

- **US strike on Syria a 'positive response': Erdogan aide**

Turkey's presidency praised the U.S. missile strike on a Syrian air base early Friday. "We view the U.S. missile strike carried out this morning against Shayrat air base in Homs, Syria as a positive response against the war crimes of Assad," said presidential spokesman Ibrahim Kalin in a written statement Friday.

More Details:

<http://www.worldbulletin.net/turkey/187537/turkeys-chp-leader-slams-syria-chemical-attack>

- **Turkey: Syrian jet pilot detained after treatment**

A Turkish court Friday detained the pilot of a Syrian military jet, which crashed near the Turkish-Syrian border last month, after his treatment in a hospital. Syrian national Mehmet Sufhan, 56-year-old pilot, was found alive after ejecting safely when the aircraft was allegedly shot by the opposition group as it took off from Lattakia to strike Idlib on Mar. 4.

More Details:

<http://aa.com.tr/en/middle-east/turkey-syrian-jet-pilot-detained-after-treatment/791443>

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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