



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

MIDDLE EAST DAILY BULLETIN

08 JANUARY 2018

NO: 2519

1. IRAQ.....	4
• The Change Movement Calls For A Delay In The First Reading Of The Budget	4
• Three civilians injured in roadside bomb explosion in Baghdad	4
• Sunni Arabs Ask for Coalition Forces in Nineveh Plains	4
• Three months after Baghdad took control, tensions high in Kirkuk	4
• Ministry of Labor investigates issue of selling children in Mosul.....	5
• Security forces arrest 12 ISIS militants in Kirkuk	5
• Barzani and Talabani families are above law in Kurdistan of Iraq.....	5
• Iraq waits for Egyptian company assistance in Iraq reconstruction: Iraqi Ambassador	6
• Algeria, Iraq eye energy coop.....	6
• Iraq returning displaced civilians from camps to unsafe areas.....	6
• Tribal Leader's Family among Six Killed in Iraq	6
• EU strategy on Iraq: new proposal to strengthen support to the Iraqi people	7
• Iraq calls for swift refinery implementation.....	7
• Iraq's parliament slams US policy shift on Quds	7
• Iraq bans Kurdish firm Kar Group from operating Kirkuk oilfields	7
• Iraqis welcome 2018 with new hopes, old fears	8
2. SYRIA.....	8
• Syrian army breaks siege of army base near Damascus.....	8
• Assad believed to be preventing Iran military entrenchment in Syria.....	8
• Fierce Syria airstrikes kill at least 21 civilians in Idlib	9
• Increasing scientific and technological cooperation between Syria and Iran discussed	9
• Pope Francis: We must rebuild trust in North Korea, Syria	9
• US Plans to Recognize Kurdish Area in Syria	9
• Russian Military Delivers Humanitarian Aid to Bukain Village in Western Syria.....	10
• Russia's vision for a new Syria to be tested in Sochi.....	10
3. IRAN.....	10
• Iran's Revolutionary Guard announces overwhelms unrest	10
• UN's 'No to Trump' adds to US defeats: Iran.....	11
• Iran Bans Teaching English in Primary Schools.....	11
• Iran's Revolutionary Guard Claims To Have Put Down Protests	11
• Calls for Prisoners to be Freed Following Protests in Iran.....	11
• UNSC Meeting on Iran Riots Brought Shame on US: Rouhani	12
• Iran ready for all nuclear deal scenarios: Araqchi	12
• Iran, Algeria Stress Broadening of Industrial Cooperation.....	12
4. ISRAEL – PALESTINE.....	13
• Arab League plans to persuade UN to recognise Palestine	13
• UNRWA vows to go on after Israel's call to scrap agency	13
• Can Putin mediate an Israeli-Palestinian settlement?	13
• Peace Now: Israel to approve more than 1,329 illegal settlement units	14

• PLO's Central Council to adopt a new political perspective, says president.....	14
• Palestinians Protest Visit of Greek Orthodox Patriarch Accused of Selling Land to Israel	14
• Hundreds in New York City protest to free Ahed Tamimi and Palestinian prisoners	14
5. JORDAN and LEBANON.....	15
• Lebanon seeking to turn public sector citizen friendly	15
• King visits army headquarters, KASOTC	15
• Mustaqbal, FPM, Marada Consider Forming Electoral Alliance.....	15
• Jordan allows entry of aid to Rukban camp	16
• PM forms committee to institutionalize work of social safety network.....	16
• President confirms commitment to judicial opinion on officers' decree, pushes for peaceful solution to Syrian crisis.....	16
• Jordan arrests 17 suspected of plotting attacks.....	16
6. ARABIAN PENINSULA AND THE GULF OF BASRA.....	17
• Saudi arrests eleven princes for protesting.....	17
• Blood-rusted Sword: Elite force of Saudi crown prince	17
• Saudi Arabia calls on US judge to drop lawsuit against the Kingdom over 9/11 attacks	17
• Langham brand will appeal to Saudi Arabia, Kuwait when it arrives in ME.....	18
• Yemen's Houthis shoot down Saudi-led coalition warplane.....	18
• Slain Yemen President Saleh's former party elects new chief	18
• UNICEF QFFD Sign Pact to Combat Cholera in Yemen	18
• Kuwait emir calls for GCC cooperation amid Qatar crisis.....	19
7. EGYPT.....	19
• Shafiq says will not stand for Egypt president in 2018	19
• Egypt Eyes Broad Participation in Syria's Reconstruction	19
• Sisi stresses Egypt's 'strategic relationship' with Saudi Arabia	20
• Clashes in Cairo after detainee dies at police station	20
• Qatar-Egypt trade exchange rises 3.4% in first nine months of 2017.....	20
• Egypt did not demand the exclusion of Sudan from GERD talks: Egyptian foreign minister	20
• SIS denounces New York Times report on Egypt's stance on Jerusalem issue	21
• Residents of a village in Upper Egypt cut off road between Qena and Cairo	21
8. NORTH AFRICA.....	21
• Celebrating Berber New Year marks shift in Algeria's identity politics.....	21
• UN Secretary General Warns Polisario of Hindering Traffic Flow on Moroccan-Mauritanian Border.....	22
• Algeria, Tunisia discuss counter-terrorism cooperation	22
• UAE Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation receives Morocco's Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation	22
• Ouyahia receives Tunisian Minister of Interior	22
• Kani brigade launch offensive on Garabulli, then withdraw	23
• Morocco Reaffirms Solidarity with Palestine during Amman Meeting on Jerusalem	23
• Democratic Current warns against politicisation of Justice	23
• Tensions rise in east Tripoli as Tarhuna brigade takes control of Garabulli	23
• Libya's eastern parliament speaker praises Russia's training of Haftar-led forces.....	24
9. AFGHANISTAN – PAKISTAN	24

• Tahirul Qadri announces countrywide anti-PML-N campaign from January 17	24
• Almost 2 of every 3 constitutional articles violated, survey finds	24
• PML-N dissidents, opposition lawmakers refuse to meet PM Abbasi during Quetta visit	25
• Balochistan political crisis: PM to meet PML-N MPAs during Quetta visit	25
• Over 40 ISIS militants killed, wounded in Afghan army raids in Kunar	25
• President Ghani Praises Zazai Tribe For Investment In Youth Education	26
• Talks on Noor's Fate Deadlocked, Govt 'Might Use Military Option'	26
10. TURKEY AND THE MIDDLE EAST	26
• 6 PKK terrorists killed in airstrikes in northern Iraq	26
• Turkish army doctor awarded for helping Iranian troops	26
• Rocket attack targets Turkish convoy in Syria's Idlib	27

1. IRAQ

- **The Change Movement Calls For A Delay In The First Reading Of The Budget**

The parliamentary bloc of the change movement called to wait for the first reading of the federal budget within the House of Representatives, warning that otherwise it cannot be modified or added to it. "There are a lot of observations when reviewing the draft budget, some of them related to the Kurdistan region and their rights and the other the general rights of the Iraqi people," deputy head of the bloc Amin Bakr told a news conference today.

More Details:

http://www.ninanews.com/News_Details.aspx?WWi5NSdPyblM%252fYlrJMwvMQ%253d%253d

- **Three civilians injured in roadside bomb explosion in Baghdad**

Three civilians were injured Monday in a roadside bomb blast in Baghdad, a security source was quoted as saying. Speaking to Alsumaria News, the source said, "A roadside explosive charge went off near a popular market at al-Nahrawan area in southeastern Baghdad, leaving three civilians injured."

More Details:

<https://www.iraqinews.com/iraq-war/three-civilians-injured-roadside-bomb-explosion-baghdad/>

- **Sunni Arabs Ask for Coalition Forces in Nineveh Plains**

The Sunni Arab tribes of Nineveh Plains in northern Iraq have renewed a call on the US-led coalition forces and the Kurdish Peshmerga to protect them against the Iranian-backed militias of Hashd al-Shaabi. Calling the Shi'ite militias "mercenaries", Sheikh Muzahim al-Hawet, the spokesperson for the Sunni Arab tribes, told German media that Hashd al-Shaabi's mission in their area is to create further instability.

More Details:

<http://www.basnews.com/index.php/en/news/iraq/405431>

- **Three months after Baghdad took control, tensions high in Kirkuk**

In a Jan. 4 meeting with a delegation representing Kurdistan's opposition parties, Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi said that an agreement has been reached to calm the situation in Kirkuk province and in the district of Tuz Khormato. The retaking of Kirkuk by the Iraqi army in October has changed the balance of power in the oil-rich town that had been under full control of the Kurds since 2014.

The operation was part of Baghdad's retaliatory measures after the Kurds held an independence referendum that has since been declared illegal.

More Details:

http://www.shafaaq.com/en/En_NewsReader/014fc716-2940-436c-a375-eb6ca05e648

- **Ministry of Labor investigates issue of selling children in Mosul**

Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs on Saturday conducted an investigation into information accusing the director of the special needs department in Nineveh of selling children who had been placed in shelters for being involved with ISIS in one way or another . In a press release published today, Ministry of Labor spokesman Ammar Menem said that "the Office of the Inspector-General of the Ministry is conducting an investigation into information alleging cooperation of director of the special needs department in Nineveh with ISIS through the sale of children who were deposited in shelters during the period of regaining control over areas taken by ISIS."

More Details:

http://www.pukmedia.com/EN/EN_Direje.aspx?Jimare=42491

- **Security forces arrest 12 ISIS militants in Kirkuk**

Iraqi security forces, backed by counter-terrorism troops, arrested 12 ISIS militants in Kirkuk province, a security source said in statements on Sunday. They were nabbed during a raid in the province, he added. The raid comes as part of an ongoing operation to purge areas in western and southern Kirkuk and the eastern part of Salahuddin province from ISIS militants.

More Details:

<http://www.thebaghdadpost.com/en/story/22048/Security-forces-arrest-12-ISIS-militants-in-Kirkuk>

- **Barzani and Talabani families are above law in Kurdistan of Iraq**

Most of the problems in tyrannical societies are based on the fact that law really doesn't exist except as a way to impose sanctions by the powerful on the weak. This has been the case in Kurdistan of Iraq as thousands of people have been suffering for many years in a society that is ruled by two corrupted Kurdish families named Barzani and Talabani.

More Details:

<http://ekurd.net/barzani-talabani-law-kurdistan-2018-01-06>

- **Iraq waits for Egyptian company assistance in Iraq reconstruction: Iraqi Ambassador**

Iraq's ambassador to Egypt, Habib Hadi Al-Sadr, stated Saturday on the sidelines of the Iraqi embassy's celebration of the 97th anniversary of foundation of Iraqi army that the joint presidential Egyptian-Iraqi committee will be formed to sign several Memoranda of Understandings (MoUs) in different fields. Sadr added that Iraq waits for the participation of Egyptian companies in reconstructing the freed cities

More Details:

<http://www.egyptindependent.com/iraq-waits-for-egyptian-company-participation-in-iraq-reconstruction-iraqi-ambassador/>

- **Algeria, Iraq eye energy coop.**

Visiting Algerian Minister of Energy Mustapha Guitouni said Sunday his country is looking forward to promoting and bolstering cooperation with Iraq in gas and oil investments. Speaking at a joint news conference with Iraqi Oil Minister Jabar Al-Luaibi, Guitouni said his Baghdad visit mainly aimed at exploring closer cooperation in the areas of gas investments and oil finds.

More Details:

<https://www.kuna.net.kw/ArticleDetails.aspx?id=2682071&Language=en>

- **Iraq returning displaced civilians from camps to unsafe areas**

Iraqi security forces are forcibly returning civilians from refugee camps to unsafe areas in the predominantly Sunni Anbar province, exposing them to death from booby-traps or acts of vigilantism, refugees and aid workers say. Managing more than two million Iraqis displaced by the war against Islamic State is one of Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi's most daunting tasks. But critics say he is more interested in winning elections in May than alleviating the suffering of displaced Iraqis and returning them safely home.

More Details:

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-refugees/iraq-returning-displaced-civilians-from-camps-to-unsafe-areas-idUSKBN1EW072>

- **Tribal Leader's Family among Six Killed in Iraq**

A suicide bomber attacked the home of tribal leader Sheikh Haitham al-Houm in Nedah. Al-Houm's wife and two relatives were killed. In Baghdad, a bomb killed one and wounded three in the Zedan neighborhood. Two people were stabbed in Ilam.

More Details:

<http://original.antiwar.com/updates/2018/01/06/tribal-leaders-family-among-six-killed-iraq/>

- **EU strategy on Iraq: new proposal to strengthen support to the Iraqi people**

Today, the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and the European Commission adopted a Joint Communication proposing an EU strategy for Iraq in order to address the many challenges the country faces following the territorial defeat of Da'esh. The proposal outlines both ongoing and longer term EU support to the country, fully taking into account the Iraqi government's priorities.

More Details:

http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-18-4_en.htm

- **Iraq calls for swift refinery implementation**

The implementation of an oil refinery project designed for 150,000 barrels of oil per day should start in the next 30 days, the Iraqi oil ministry said. Iraqi Oil Minister Jabbar al-Luaibi said the execution of a refinery project in eastern Maysan project should start within the next 30 days, according to a pledge made to the government. According to Luabi's ministry, if the contract isn't implemented in time, it would be cancelled.

More Details:

https://www.upi.com/Energy-News/2018/01/08/Iraq-calls-for-swift-refinery-implementation/1381515409212/?utm_source=sec&utm_campaign=sl&utm_medium=1

- **Iraq's parliament slams US policy shift on Quds**

Iraq's Parliament on Sunday passed a resolution condemning the US move to recognize al-Quds as Israeli regime's capital. The Iraqi lawmakers decided that the US decision was a provocation to all religions and a threat to international peace. The lawmakers also said al-Quds is the undisputed capital of the Palestinian state.

More Details:

http://en.abna24.com/news/middle-east/iraq%E2%80%99s-parliament-slams-us-policy-shift-on-quds_876337.html

- **Iraq bans Kurdish firm Kar Group from operating Kirkuk oilfields**

Iraq's parliament voted on Monday to ban Kurdish engineering firm Kar Group from operating Kirkuk's oilfields, following Iraq's recapture of the Kurdish-held oil region in October. The Kurds have withdrawn from most Kirkuk oilfields since October but the vote came after lawmakers said the Kar

Group refused to cooperate with Iraq's state-run North Oil Co. (NOC) and hand back the Khurmala oilfield.

More Details:

<https://www.reuters.com/article/mideast-crisis-iraq-kurd/update-1-iraq-bans-kurdish-firm-kar-group-from-operating-kirkuk-oilfields-idUSL8N1P31PS?rpc=401&>

- **Iraqis welcome 2018 with new hopes, old fears**

Iraq started the new year with-out parts of its territory under Islamic State (ISIS) control for the first time in four years but, as Iraqis look to a future free from the ills of the militant group, many of the country's problems are in urgent need of being addressed. When ISIS captured Falluja in January 2014, Iraq was plagued with serious levels of corruption and a revival of sectarianism. Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi has vowed to crack down on both, drawing sup-port and optimism from many Iraqis.

More Details:

<http://www.middle-east-online.com/english/?id=86682>

2. SYRIA

- **Syrian army breaks siege of army base near Damascus**

Syria's army has broken the siege of an army base encircled by opposition forces on the eastern outskirts of Damascus, state television and a war monitor reported on Sunday. Last Sunday, rebels, mainly belonging to the Islamist Ahrar al Sham faction, widened their control of parts of the Military Vehicles Administration base in the Eastern Ghouta town of Harasta.

More Details:

<http://www.middle-east-online.com/english/?id=86688>

- **Assad believed to be preventing Iran military entrenchment in Syria**

Security Cabinet meets to discuss threats on Israel's northern border amid assessments the Syrian president rejected Tehran's offer to set up bases, military industry in his country, presumably to not give Israel cause to attack him and undo his hard-won achievements against the rebels. The Security Cabinet discussed Sunday the strategic and tactical aspects of the threats on Israel's northern border, as well as the necessary diplomatic activity vis-à-vis Russia and the US in an effort to prevent Syria from turning into a base for Iranian forces.

More Details:

<https://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-5068003,00.html>

- **Fierce Syria airstrikes kill at least 21 civilians in Idlib**

More than 21 civilians - including eight children and 11 members of the same family - were killed by Syrian regime and Russian airstrikes in Idlib province on Sunday night. A source in the Syrian civil defence for the area, or White Helmets, told The New Arab that a Russian warplane fired two missiles on a chicken farm in the area.

More Details:

<https://www.alaraby.co.uk/english/news/2018/1/8/syria-airstrikes-kill-at-least-21-civilians-in-idlib>

- **Increasing scientific and technological cooperation between Syria and Iran discussed**

Iranian Vice-President for Science and Technology Sorena Sattari expressed Iran's readiness to transfer its experience in the field of scientific and knowledge production to Syria and link the universities and applied research with the production process in all domains. Sattari's remark came during his meeting with Syria's Ambassador in Tehran Adnan Mahmoud on Monday.

More Details:

<https://sana.sy/en/?p=123664>

- **Pope Francis: We must rebuild trust in North Korea, Syria**

Pope Francis is urging international efforts to rebuild trust on the Korean peninsula and in Syria, using his annual foreign policy address to press his demand that political leaders put the dignity of their people before war, profits or power. In a wide-ranging speech Monday to ambassadors from some 185 nations, Francis reaffirmed the need to respect the status quo of Jerusalem and refrain from any initiative that exacerbates hostilities.

More Details:

<https://nypost.com/2018/01/08/pope-francis-we-must-rebuild-trust-in-north-korea-syria/>

- **US Plans to Recognize Kurdish Area in Syria**

Arab media reports claimed that Washington is planning 'concrete steps' toward providing a Syrian Democratic Forces-controlled area in Northern Syria's Eastern Euphrates region three times the size of Lebanon with diplomatic recognition. An unnamed senior Western official was quoted by Asharq Al-Awsat newspaper as saying that the 28,000 square km territory, controlled by the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), a collection of predominantly Kurdish militias including the YPG People's Protection Units, took its first step toward US recognition after US Defense Secretary Jim Mattis

promised to send US diplomats to SDF-controlled areas to work alongside US troops operating in the region.

More Details:

<http://en.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13961018000434>

- **Russian Military Delivers Humanitarian Aid to Bukain Village in Western Syria**

The Russian Center for Reconciliation of opposing sides in Syria has delivered several tonnes of humanitarian aid, mainly food, to the village of Bukain in Syria's western province of Rif Dimashq, a Sputnik correspondent reported Monday. The settlement has been under control of outlawed armed groups. When the militants retreated, they destroyed schools, hospitals and the water supply. The main part of the infrastructure has already been restored, but people are still in need of aid.

More Details:

<https://sputniknews.com/middleeast/201801081060584797-russia-syria-humanitarian-aid/>

- **Russia's vision for a new Syria to be tested in Sochi**

Russia, Turkey and Iran — the guarantors of a cease-fire in Syria — agreed at the end of December to hold the Syrian National Dialogue Congress in the Russian resort of Sochi on Jan. 29 and 30. In their final statement, which was issued last month following the eighth round of Astana talks, the three countries called on representatives of the regime and the opposition to participate in these talks in a bid to end the fighting in Syria and start the reconstruction process.

More Details:

<http://www.arabnews.com/node/1220841>

3. IRAN

- **Iran's Revolutionary Guard announces overwhelms unrest**

Iran's Revolutionary Guard said on Sunday the country's people and security forces had defeated unrest fomented by foreign enemies, as parliament and key security officials met to discuss the boldest challenge to the clerical establishment since 2009. "Iran's revolutionary people along with tens of thousands of Basij forces, police and the Intelligence Ministry have broken down the chain (of unrest) created ... by the United States, Britain, the Zionist regime (Israel), Saudi Arabia, the hypocrites (Mujahideen) and monarchists," the Guard said in a statement on its Sepahnews website.

More Details:

<http://www.middle-east-online.com/english/?id=86677>

- **UN's 'No to Trump' adds to US defeats: Iran**

The negative response to Trump and his administration during the UN Security Council's emergency meeting on the recent protests in Iran was the continuation of the US defeats in the world, Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman said here on Monday. The 'No' which was said to the US administration by the participating nations in the UNSC emergency meeting on Iran held after Trump's call, was another defeat of Washington in foreign policy and in the regional and global arenas, Bahram Qasemi told reporters during a weekly press briefing.

More Details:

<http://www.irna.ir/en/News/82789339>

- **Iran Bans Teaching English in Primary Schools**

Iran bans teaching English in primary schools after Iranian High Commissioner Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said early learning of this language created conditions for a Western "cultural invasion," Reuters reported. "Teaching English in the official training course of state and private primary schools is against the laws and regulations," the head of the State Higher Education Council, Mehdi Navid-Adham, told Iran's state television.

More Details:

<http://www.novinite.com/articles/186811/Iran+Bans+Teaching+English+in+Primary+Schools>

- **Iran's Revolutionary Guard Claims To Have Put Down Protests**

Iran's Revolutionary Guard is claiming to have quelled anti-government protests that began late last month and spread to several major cities, resulting in the deaths of at least 21 people. The demonstrations began on Dec. 28 in the second-largest city of Mashad, followed a sharp rise in food prices against a backdrop of accelerating unemployment.

More Details:

<https://www.npr.org/sections/thetwo-way/2018/01/08/576418381/irans-revolutionary-guard-claims-to-have-put-down-protests>

- **Calls for Prisoners to be Freed Following Protests in Iran**

It was announced last week that the violent protests that accumulated a total death-toll of 21 had ended. The mass protests had erupted over economic issues in the city of Mashhad on December 28. The unrest spread like wildfire across the whole country, turning against the regime in more than 80

cities. Over 500 people were arrested in the capital Tehran alone, and local media says that more than 1,000 were detained throughout the country. The average age of those arrested is under 25, Deputy Interior Minister, Hossein Zolfaghari, said.

More Details:

<http://georgiatoday.ge/news/8709/Calls-for-Prisoners-to-be-Freed-Following-Protests-in-Iran>

- **UNSC Meeting on Iran Riots Brought Shame on US: Rouhani**

President Hassan Rouhani says the United States shamed itself by trying to target the Islamic Republic at a UN Security Council (UNSC) meeting it had called on the recent events inside Iran. “A gathering and protest may be exploited by certain sides. This is natural and happens all over the world,” said Rouhani at a meeting with staff of the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Finance in Tehran on Monday.

More Details:

<http://ifpnews.com/wired/unsc-meeting-iran-riots-brought-shame-us-rouhani/>

- **Iran ready for all nuclear deal scenarios: Araqchi**

Iran is prepared for all possible scenarios regarding the nuclear agreement, said the deputy foreign minister of Iran in the Second Tehran Security Conference on Monday. “In case the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), the region will suffer the most,” said Abbas Araqchi at the panel on security in West Asia, IRNA reported.

More Details:

<http://iran-daily.com/News/207768.html>

- **Iran, Algeria Stress Broadening of Industrial Cooperation**

Iranian Ambassador to Algeria Reza Ameri and Algerian Minister of Energy and Mining Youcef Yousfi in a meeting in Algiers underlined the need to expand all-out cooperation, specially in industrial and economic fields. During the meeting in the Algerian capital on Sunday, Ameri and Yousfi explored avenues for bolstering and reinvigorating bilateral relations in the fields of mining and industry.

More Details:

<http://en.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13961018000971>

4. ISRAEL – PALESTINE

- **Arab League plans to persuade UN to recognise Palestine**

Arab states will soon embark on a diplomatic drive to persuade the United Nations to recognise a Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital on territory captured by Israel in the 1967 war, Jordan's Foreign Minister Ayman Safadi said. Six Arab foreign ministers met in Amman on Saturday to follow up on earlier decisions taken by the Arab League to counter US President Donald Trump's move in December to recognise Jerusalem as Israel's capital, a decision that overturned decades of US policy on the Middle East.

More Details:

<http://www.middle-east-online.com/english/?id=86674>

- **UNRWA vows to go on after Israel's call to scrap agency**

The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees (UNRWA) has vowed to continue its work after Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu called for it to be scrapped. In a series of tweets on Sunday evening, a spokesperson for the UN agency said it would continue providing help to Palestinian refugees until the international community comes up with a solution for their plight.

More Details:

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/01/unrwa-vows-israel-call-scrap-agency-180108092417199.html>

- **Can Putin mediate an Israeli-Palestinian settlement?**

US President Donald Trump has self-confidently proclaimed that he can succeed where previous American presidents have failed in bringing about an Israeli-Palestinian peace settlement. However, his recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital and announcement that the US Embassy in Israel will move there have weakened his ability to do this. With the Palestinians also claiming Jerusalem as the capital of a future Palestinian state, Trump's definitive backing Israel's claim to the entire city — in defiance of past American policy — undermined confidence worldwide that he will work for an Israeli-Palestinian peace settlement acceptable to the Palestinians.

More Details:

<http://www.thearabweekly.com/Debate/9966/Can-Putin-mediate-an-Israeli-Palestinian-settlement%3F>

- **Peace Now: Israel to approve more than 1,329 illegal settlement units**

The Israeli Civil Administration's High Planning Committee is expected to approve the promotion of at least 1,329 housing units in illegal settlements in the occupied West Bank, according to settlement watchdog Peace Now. In a statement released on Friday, Peace Now said that the committee published its agenda, and is expected to approve the new settlement units next Wednesday, January 10.

More Details:

<http://www.maannnews.com/Content.aspx?id=779727>

- **PLO's Central Council to adopt a new political perspective, says president**

President of the Palestinian National Council (PNC) Salim Zannoun said on Monday that the upcoming Central Council meeting scheduled for January 14 in Ramallah will seek a new political perspective to respond to US President Donald Trump's decision recognizing Jerusalem as Israel's capital. Zannoun told the official Palestine TV that in addition to discussing how to confront the US decision on Jerusalem, the meeting will also discuss what to do regarding the recent decision of the governing Israeli party, the Likud, to annex Israeli settlements in the occupied West Bank to Israel.

More Details:

<http://english.wafa.ps/page.aspx?id=jK6usNa95952882201ajK6usN>

- **Palestinians Protest Visit of Greek Orthodox Patriarch Accused of Selling Land to Israel**

Palestinian Christians from around the occupied West Bank, East Jerusalem, and Israel came out in harsh opposition on Saturday to a visit by Greek Orthodox Church Patriarch of Jerusalem, Theophilos III, to the southern occupied West Bank city of Bethlehem. Theophilos III, along with several other religious and political figures, were visiting Bethlehem as part of celebrations for Greek Orthodox Christmas Eve.

More Details:

<http://www.palestinechronicle.com/palestinians-protest-visit-greek-orthodox-patriarch-accused-selling-land-israel-video/>

- **Hundreds in New York City protest to free Ahed Tamimi and Palestinian prisoners**

Hundreds of demonstrators gathered in New York's Grand Central Station following a blizzard in the city on Friday, 5 January to demand freedom for imprisoned Palestinian teen activist Ahed Tamimi, 16, and her fellow Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails. Organized by Samidoun Palestinian Prisoner Solidarity Network and CODEPINK: Women for Peace with the active participation of dozens of New

York-based Palestine and social justice organizations, participants carried signs, banners and flags supporting Ahmed and fellow Palestinian prisoners.

More Details:

<http://samidoun.net/2018/01/hundreds-in-new-york-city-protest-to-free-ahed-tamimi-and-palestinian-prisoners/>

5. JORDAN and LEBANON

- **Lebanon seeking to turn public sector citizen friendly**

Promoting a citizen-oriented public administration through digital transformation aimed at combat-ing corruption and fostering account-ability and transparency is the challenging task of Lebanon's Office of the Minister of State for Administrative Reform (OMSAR). The mission might seem impossible in a country plagued by decades of a dysfunctional and corrupt public sector. However, Inaya Ezzeddine, minister of state for administra-tive development, insisted that where there is a will, there is always a way.

More Details:

<http://www.middle-east-online.com/english/?id=86690>

- **King visits army headquarters, KASOTC**

His Majesty King Abdullah, the Supreme Commander of the Jordan Armed Forces-Arab Army (JAF), on Sunday visited the General Command of JAF, according to a Royal Court statement. The Supreme Commander was received by Chairman of the Joint Chiefs-of-Staff Lt. Gen. Mahmoud Freihath, Royal Jordanian Air Force Commander and JAF heads of staff.

More Details:

<http://jordantimes.com/news/local/king-visits-army-headquarters-kasotc>

- **Mustaqbal, FPM, Marada Consider Forming Electoral Alliance**

Contacts are reportedly underway between al-Mustaqbal Movement, the Free Patriotic Movement and the Marada Movement in order to strike an electoral alliance to stand in the upcoming parliamentary elections, al-Joumhouria daily reported on Monday. The matter has not been yet resolved pending the completion of negotiations between head of Mustaqbal PM Saad Hariri and Marada chief MP Suleiman Franjeh, said the daily.

More Details:

<http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/240551-report-mustaqbal-fpm-marada-consider-forming-electoral-alliance>

- **Jordan allows entry of aid to Rukban camp**

Jordan has allowed the entry of humanitarian aid for one time to the Rukban camp for displaced Syrians after the UN presented a plan in which it pledged to deliver aid to the camp that is located inside Syria, according to official spokesperson of the Ministry of Foreign and Expatriates Affairs Mohammad Al Kayed. Jordan had said it will only allow the delivery of aid as an exceptional measure if the UN presents a plan to provide aid to dwellers of the camp.

More Details:

http://en.ammonnews.net/article.aspx?articleNO=36920#.WIN_VIVI_cs

- **PM forms committee to institutionalize work of social safety network**

Prime Minister Hani Al Mulki has decided to form a ministerial committee that will be responsible for all details related to the social safety network. The committee will be chaired by the minister of social development with the membership of the minister of labour, health, state ministers for media affairs, as well as the ministers of ICT, public sector development, finance and industry and trade.

More Details:

http://petra.gov.jo/Public_News/Nws_NewsDetails.aspx?lang=2&site_id=1&NewsID=335137&CatID=13

- **President confirms commitment to judicial opinion on officers' decree, pushes for peaceful solution to Syrian crisis**

Lebanese President Michel Aoun on Monday confirmed commitment to the opinion of the Lebanese judiciary on the 1994 officers' seniority decree. The presidential press office issued a statement today explaining that the opinion of the competent judicial authorities on the heatedly debated decree is supposed to be respected by all sides especially that the judiciary is the right place to resolve disputes taking place within institutions.

More Details:

<http://nna-leb.gov.lb/en/show-news/87050/President-confirms-commitment-to-judicial-opinion-on-officers-39-decree-pushes-for-peaceful-solution-to-Syrian-crisis>

- **Jordan arrests 17 suspected of plotting attacks**

Jordan's intelligence service said Monday it has arrested 17 people suspected of links to the Islamic State group and of planning attacks in the kingdom. The service "foiled... a major destructive terrorist

plot planned by a terrorist cell loyal to Daesh during November 2017," it said in a statement, using an Arabic acronym for IS.

More Details:

<https://thepeninsulaqatar.com/article/08/01/2018/Jordan-arrests-17-suspected-of-plotting-attacks>

6. ARABIAN PENINSULA AND THE GULF OF BASRA

- **Saudi arrests eleven princes for protesting**

Eleven Saudi princes face trials in the kingdom after being arrested for a protest against the end of state subsidies for their utility bills, the attorney general said on Sunday. The princes were detained after gathering outside a palace in Riyadh on Thursday to demonstrate against a government decision to stop paying the water and electricity bills of royals.

More Details:

<http://www.middle-east-online.com/english/?id=86675>

- **Blood-rusted Sword: Elite force of Saudi crown prince**

Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman is using an elite force to suppress dissent within the royal family. The brigade, which reports directly to the crown prince, is called al-Ajrab Sword (Blood-rusted Sword).

More Details:

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/01/blood-rusted-sword-elite-force-saudi-crown-prince-180108094812471.html>

- **Saudi Arabia calls on US judge to drop lawsuit against the Kingdom over 9/11 attacks**

Saudi Arabia has asked a US federal judge to reject a lawsuit that seeks to hold the Kingdom accountable for the September 11 attacks of 2001, Saudi newspaper Okaz reported yesterday. The paper cited a document presented by Riyadh's lawyers to the Manhattan federal court in which he stated that the Justice Against Sponsors of Terrorism Act, which was passed in Congress in 2016 and is commonly known as JASTA, does not change the reality on the ground, which is that there is no evidence of Saudi Arabia's involvement in the 2001 attacks.

More Details:

<https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20180108-saudi-arabia-calls-on-us-judge-to-drop-lawsuit-against-the-kingdom-over-9-11-attacks/>

- **Langham brand will appeal to Saudi Arabia, Kuwait when it arrives in ME**

The arrival of the first The Langham hotel in the Middle East will be a major hit with people across the GCC — especially those in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait — who have fond memories from trips to stay at the famous London location. Since it was announced, Omniyat, the developers of The Langham Downtown Dubai, has registered a significant amount of interest from the GCC, China and other countries in the Far East.

More Details:

<http://saudigazette.com.sa/article/525706/BUSINESS/Langham-brand-will-appeal-to-Saudi-Arabia-Kuwait-when-it-arrives-in-ME>

- **Yemen's Houthis shoot down Saudi-led coalition warplane**

Yemen's Houthi forces shot down a warplane of the Saudi-led coalition in Saada province, broadcasters said on Sunday. Saudi-owned TV channel Al Arabiya said the two pilots survived.

More Details:

<https://thepeninsulaqatar.com/article/07/01/2018/Yemen%E2%80%99s-Houthis-shoot-down-Saudi-led-coalition-warplane>

- **Slain Yemen President Saleh's former party elects new chief**

The political party of Yemen's former President Ali Abdullah Saleh, who was killed in December by his Houthi rebel allies, named his replacement on Sunday. The General People's Congress, a leading player in Yemeni politics for decades, elected former deputy premier Sadiq Amin Aburas by consensus at a meeting of its general committee, it said in a statement.

More Details:

<https://www.alaraby.co.uk/english/news/2018/1/8/slain-yemen-president-salehs-former-party-elects-new-chief>

- **UNICEF QFFD Sign Pact to Combat Cholera in Yemen**

THE Qatar Fund for Development (QFFD) on Sunday signed a \$5 million cooperation agreement with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) to combat cholera in Yemen. In a statement, the UNICEF said it was concerned about the impending collapse of the health system in Yemen, saying the total needs to combat the crisis is \$339 million, of which only \$136 million has been covered. It added that 19 million people lack access to clean water and sanitation, while 14 million people are in dire need of basic health care.

More Details:

<https://www.albawaba.com/business/pr/unicef-qffd-sign-pact-combat-cholera-yemen-1070880>

- **Kuwait emir calls for GCC cooperation amid Qatar crisis**

Kuwait's Emir Sabah al-Ahmed al-Sabah on Monday stressed the importance of cooperation between the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states as a blockade of member Qatar enters its eighth month. Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Bahrain and Egypt imposed a sea, air and land blockade against Qatar on 5 June, accusing Doha of aiding "terrorists" and having close ties with Iran. Qatar denies the allegations.

More Details:

<https://www.alaraby.co.uk/english/news/2018/1/8/kuwait-emir-calls-for-gcc-cooperation-amid-qatar-crisis>

7. EGYPT

- **Shafiq says will not stand for Egypt president in 2018**

Egypt's former Prime Minister Ahmed Shafiq said on Sunday that he will not now be a candidate in this year's presidential election, reversing a previous pledge to stand. His decision to step aside is likely to pave the way for the poll to be dominated by incumbent Abdel Fattah al-Sisi.

More Details:

<http://www.middle-east-online.com/english/?id=86686>

- **Egypt Eyes Broad Participation in Syria's Reconstruction**

Egyptian officials expressed their hope for a wide participation in the reconstruction of Syria, stressing that dozens of engineering and contracting companies have already begun work there, with the expectation that Egyptian companies get a share of up to 25%, providing thousands of jobs in the Syrian market. Over the past months, Egypt's successful mediation between the two sides of the Syrian crisis to conclude a ceasefire agreement in dozens of towns in northern Homs has demonstrated a growing positive role for Cairo in efforts to put an end to the ongoing war.

More Details:

<https://aawsat.com/english/home/article/1136936/egypt-eyes-broad-participation-syria%E2%80%99s-reconstruction>

- **Sisi stresses Egypt's 'strategic relationship' with Saudi Arabia**

Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi on Saturday stressed the “strategic and discrete” nature of the Egyptian-Saudi relations. Sisi was speaking during a meeting in Cairo with Saudi Minister of Civil Service Issam bin Said, in the presence of the Saudi ambassador to Egypt.

More Details:

<https://english.alarabiya.net/en/News/middle-east/2018/01/07/Sisi-stresses-Egypt-s-strategic-relationship-with-Saudi-Arabia-.html>

- **Clashes in Cairo after detainee dies at police station**

Clashes erupted between Egyptian protesters and policemen on Saturday outside a Cairo police station over the death of a young man in custody, security sources said. The protesters torched 10 cars including three police vehicles, they said. Nine people were injured and 40 people arrested in the overnight clashes in Cairo's Moqattam district which saw some protesters throw petrol bombs as police responded with tear gas and birdshot, they said.

More Details:

<https://thepeninsulaqatar.com/article/06/01/2018/Clashes-in-Cairo-after-detainee-dies-at-police-station>

- **Qatar-Egypt trade exchange rises 3.4% in first nine months of 2017**

The volume of trade exchange between Egypt and Qatar rose by 3.4 percent, reaching around \$1.346 billion during the first nine months of 2017, Egyptian state-run statics agency CAMPAS said Sunday. Trade exchange earlier stood at \$1.301 million during the first nine months of 2016, CAMPAS further added in a bulletin sent to Amwal Al Ghad.

More Details:

<http://en.amwalalghad.com/investment-news/industry-trade/62008-qatar-egypt-trade-exchange-rises-34-in-first-nine-months-of-2017.html>

- **Egypt did not demand the exclusion of Sudan from GERD talks: Egyptian foreign minister**

Egypt's Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry has denied media reports that Egypt demanded the exclusion of Sudan from negotiations over the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) project, which has been the source of tension between the two neighbouring nations. In a live interview on ON ETV channel's Kol Youm talk-show on Sunday, Shoukry denied media reports in recent days that Egypt wanted the World Bank to replace Sudan in the GERD talks.

More Details:

<http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/64/287759/Egypt/Politics-/Egypt-did-not-demand-the-exclusion-of-Sudan-from-G.aspx>

- **SIS denounces New York Times report on Egypt's stance on Jerusalem issue**

State Information Service (SIS) denounced on Sunday a report published by international media outlet New York Times that claimed the existence of audio recordings of an alleged Egyptian intelligence officer speaking to four public figures and explaining what their stance should be in the media regarding the Jerusalem issue.

More Details:

<https://dailynewsegypt.com/2018/01/07/sis-denounces-new-york-times-report-egypts-stance-jerusalem-issue/>

- **Residents of a village in Upper Egypt cut off road between Qena and Cairo**

The agricultural road between Aswan and Luxor was cut-off for part of Saturday night when a number of residents from Semari village blockaded it in protest at the police allegedly torturing to death a male from the village. According to local media reports, the residents set up barriers of wood, tires, and set fire to it the road to block the passage of cars coming from Qena.

More Details:

<http://www.egyptindependent.com/residents-village-upper-egypt-cut-off-road-qena-cairo/>

8. NORTH AFRICA

- **Celebrating Berber New Year marks shift in Algeria's identity politics**

Algeria will become the first North African country to celebrate the Berber new year as a national public holiday. The move signals a major shift in identity politics, which had been dominated by strife and tensions between the government in Algiers and most of the Berber-speaking population in the restive north-eastern Kabylie region.

More Details:

<http://www.middle-east-online.com/english/?id=86693>

- **UN Secretary General Warns Polisario of Hindering Traffic Flow on Moroccan-Mauritanian Border**

The UN Secretary General, Antonio Guterres, has warned the Polisario of obstructing commercial traffic flow between Morocco and Mauritania, after the Algerian-sponsored separatist group deployed militiamen in an area that is supposed to remain demilitarized under the UN brokered 1991 ceasefire agreement.

More Details:

<http://northafricapost.com/21615-un-secretary-general-warns-polisario-hindering-traffic-flow-moroccan-mauritanian-border.html>

- **Algeria, Tunisia discuss counter-terrorism cooperation**

Algeria and Tunisia on Sunday discussed ways and means to strengthen security cooperation, as part of the visit of Tunisian Interior Minister Lotfi Brahém to Algiers. 'My visit is part of usual bilateral dialogue between Algiers and Tunis aiming at examining and building on previous experiences for the service of the security of both countries and people,' Brahém told reporters after his meeting with Algerian Interior Minister Noureddine Bedoui.

More Details:

<http://tdailynews.net/story-z9682760>

- **UAE Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation receives Morocco's Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation**

Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan, UAE Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, has received Morocco's Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Nasser Bourita. During the meeting, they discussed the fraternal relations and existing cooperation between the two countries. They also reviewed ways to enhance bilateral relations between the UAE and Morocco, as well as how they would expand relations in the best interest of the two fraternal countries and its people.

More Details:

<http://marocgazette.com/story-z2904840>

- **Ouyahia receives Tunisian Minister of Interior**

Prime Minister Ahmed Ouyahia received Monday, in Algiers, Tunisian Minister of Interior Lotfi Brahém who is on a working visit to Algeria as part of consultation meetings between the two countries' officials, said a communiqué of the Prime Minister's Office.

More Details:

<http://en.aps.dz/algeria/22172-ouyahia-receives-tunisian-minister-of-interior>

- **Kani brigade launch offensive on Garabulli, then withdraw**

The notorious and heavily armed Kani Brigade from Tarhuna attacked Garabulli, some 50 km's from Tripoli earlier today, adding more tension to the often conflict-ridden town. They withdrew their forces tonight. The kidnapping of two Kani members, and the killing of one, by a gunman from Garabulli is understood to have sparked the offensive.

More Details:

<https://www.libyaherald.com/2018/01/08/kani-brigade-launch-offensive-on-garabulli-then-withdraw/>

- **Morocco Reaffirms Solidarity with Palestine during Amman Meeting on Jerusalem**

Jordan's capital, Amman gathered on Saturday, January 6 Arab foreign ministers, including Morocco's Nasser Bourita to discuss the ongoing crisis over U.S President Donald Trump's decision to recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital. During the Arab ministerial meeting, six countries vowed their commitment to seek international recognition of a Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital.

More Details:

<https://www.moroccoworldnews.com/2018/01/237839/morocco-palestine-amman-jerusalem/>

- **Democratic Current warns against politicisation of Justice**

The Democratic Current warned on Sunday the ruling coalition against any instrumentalisation of Justice aimed at "terrorising" the political opponents, to question the sincerity of the polls and favour the return of dictatorship. This warning was made as several military complaints were filed against Yassine Ayari a few days before his constitutional oath.

More Details:

<https://www.tap.info.tn/en/Portal-Politics/9732171-democratic-current>

- **Tensions rise in east Tripoli as Tarhuna brigade takes control of Garabulli**

A heavily armed brigade from Tarhuna city, known as Kani Brigade, took control on Sunday of Garabulli (Castelverde) town, some 70 km east of Tripoli, and forced the Presidential Council brigades stationed in two checkpoints out of the town. Local residents said Kani Brigade launched a surprise attack on the town early in the day after two of its members were kidnapped by a gunman from

Garabulli named “Saddam” a day before. One of the captives was released and the other was reportedly killed, which ignited the tensions.

More Details:

<https://www.libyaobserver.ly/news/tensions-rise-east-tripoli-tarhuna-brigade-takes-control-garabulli>

- **Libya’s eastern parliament speaker praises Russia’s training of Haftar-led forces**

The speaker of the Tobruk-based House of Representatives in eastern Libya, Aquilah Saleh, told Sputnik on Saturday that Russia has contributed to the Libyan crisis settlement. “We see that Russia’s role assists in the reconciliation between the Libyans,” Saleh said, according to Sputnik.

More Details:

<http://www.libyanexpress.com/libyas-eastern-parliament-speaker-praises-russias-training-of-haftar-led-forces/>

9. AFGHANISTAN – PAKISTAN

- **Tahirul Qadri announces countrywide anti-PML-N campaign from January 17**

Pakistan Awami Tehreek Chief Tahirul Qadri has announced to launch countrywide anti-PML-N campaign from January 17, after all parties conference (APC) seven-day deadline ended on January 7 for the resignation of Punjab Chief Minister Shahbaz Sharif and Law Minister Rana Sanaullah over their alleged involvement in the Model Town carnage.

More Details:

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/latest/266045-tahirul-qadri-announces-countrywide-anti-pml-n-campaign-from-january-17>

- **Almost 2 of every 3 constitutional articles violated, survey finds**

Ninety-four articles of the constitution have been violated, with four of 10 people having little information about the basic law and more than half complaining they have no access to justice. People say of every 10 individuals three enjoy their legal rights, and that the law has brought positive changes to the lives of six out of every 10 Afghans. Many call the freedom of expression the best right they have been granted by the constitution.

More Details:

<https://www.pajhwok.com/en/2018/01/08/almost-2-every-3-constitutional-articles-violated-survey-finds>

- **PML-N dissidents, opposition lawmakers refuse to meet PM Abbasi during Quetta visit**

The opposition in the Balochistan Assembly on Monday turned down an invitation for a meeting with Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi, who is in Quetta in an effort to garner support for beleaguered Chief Minister Nawab Sanaullah Zehri, who currently faces a vote of no-confidence in the Balochistan Assembly. "We have decided not to meet the Prime Minister", Leader of the Opposition Maulana Abdul Wasey said while speaking to DawnNews, explaining that he and his followers could not "ride two boats."

More Details:

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1381605/pml-n-dissidents-opposition-lawmakers-refuse-to-meet-pm-abbasi-during-quetta-visit>

- **Balochistan political crisis: PM to meet PML-N MPAs during Quetta visit**

Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi arrived here on Monday and is expected to meet with Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz lawmakers, who seem to be abandoning their leader — Chief Minister Sanaullah Zehri. Upon arrival at the Governor House, a smartly turned-out contingent of police presented guard of honour to the prime minister.

More Details:

<https://www.geo.tv/latest/175774-40-mpas-supporting-no-confidence-motion-against-zehri-pml-qs-bizenjo>

- **Over 40 ISIS militants killed, wounded in Afghan army raids in Kunar**

Over 40 militants affiliated with the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) terrorist group were killed or wounded during the Afghan army artillery and airstrikes in eastern Kunar province of Afghanistan. The 201st Silab Corps of the Afghan army in the East said the ISIS militants launched a coordinated attack on public uprising and Afghan local Police forces in Soki district.

More Details:

<https://www.khaama.com/over-40-isis-militants-killed-wounded-in-afghan-army-raids-in-kunar-04219>

- **President Ghani Praises Zazai Tribe For Investment In Youth Education**

President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani in a meeting with a number of elders, ulema and youth of Zazai tribe heard their problems and demands. In the held meeting yesterday at presidential palace, representing others, member of parliament Gul Padshah Majeedi, secretary of parliament's Lower House Abdul Qadir Zazai Watandost, head of Zazai Tribe Council Abdul Samad Zazai, Daud Zazai and Delbar Jan Arman spoke and while praising NUG for its achievements in various sectors declared their support from the government.

More Details:

<http://www.bakhtarnews.com.af/eng/politics.html>

- **Talks on Noor's Fate Deadlocked, Govt 'Might Use Military Option'**

Some sources said the president is considering military options when introducing a new Balkh governor. Amid the ongoing controversy over the fate of ousted Balkh governor Atta Mohammad Noor, the third meeting between Jamiat-e-Islami party and the presidential palace on Sunday ended in deadlock, sources told TOLONews.

More Details:

<http://www.tolonews.com/afghanistan/talks-noor%E2%80%99s-fate-deadlocked-govt-%E2%80%98might-use-military-option%E2%80%99>

10.TURKEY AND THE MIDDLE EAST

- **6 PKK terrorists killed in airstrikes in northern Iraq**

Six PKK terrorists have been killed in airstrikes carried out by Turkish jets in northern Iraq, as part of counter-terror operations, the military said Sunday. According to a statement released by the military, the terrorists were planning attacks on military posts and bases when they were killed.

More Details:

<https://www.dailysabah.com/war-on-terror/2018/01/07/6-pkk-terrorists-killed-in-airstrikes-in-northern-iraq>

- **Turkish army doctor awarded for helping Iranian troops**

A Turkish military officer was awarded by the local authority on Monday for providing emergency medical care to a group of Iranian soldiers who were wounded in a terror attack early last month in the southeastern Turkish province of Igdir. Lieutenant Doctor Mehmet Bahadır Calhan was on duty

when a small contingent of Iranian soldiers and engineers were attacked by PKK terrorists on the Turkish-Iranian border on Dec. 4, 2017.

More Details:

<http://www.worldbulletin.net/turkey/197645/turkish-army-doctor-awarded-for-helping-iranian-troops>

- **Rocket attack targets Turkish convoy in Syria's Idlib**

A rocket attack has targeted a Turkish military convoy in Syria's northwestern province of Idlib, according to a military source on Monday. The rocket landed just 20-30 meters from the convoy in Darat Izzah district, the source said, speaking on condition of anonymity due to restrictions on talking to the media. No injuries were reported in the attack. The military vehicles in the convoy were also said to be unharmed, the source added.

More Details:

<http://aa.com.tr/en/middle-east/rocket-attack-targets-turkish-convoy-in-syrias-idlib/1025382>

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.*

Bu bülten **ORSAM Ortadoğu Uzman Yardımcısı Firuze Yağmur Gökler tarafından hazırlanmaktadır. Bülten Ortadoğu ülkelerinin yerel haber kaynaklarından derlenmektedir. Belirtilen görüşler bölge ülkelerinin haber kaynaklarına ve ismi geçen yazarlara ait olup ORSAM'ın görüşünü yansıtmamaktadır.*