



# 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

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**13 MARCH 2017**

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## 1. IRAQ

- **House Speaker: Conditions Suitable For A Comprehensive National Reconciliation**

Parliament Speaker Salim al-Jubouri said that conditions today are suitable for conducting a comprehensive national reconciliation, but what makes those conditions more convenient is to re-displaced people to their homes and build them up and make them more stable and secure.

More Details:

[http://www.ninanews.com/News\\_Details.aspx?QIQEYv9L9V0o0%252b6eXi6uRA%253d%253d](http://www.ninanews.com/News_Details.aspx?QIQEYv9L9V0o0%252b6eXi6uRA%253d%253d)

- **Saudis propose coordination panel with Iraq following delegation's visit**

Saudi Arabia has suggested forming a joint coordination council with Iraq as part of a broader agreement to improve relations that went tensional during Baghdad's two-year war with the Islamic State. A spokesperson of the Iraqi Foreign Ministry said in a statement late Sunday that the Saudi side, during a visit by a delegation from the Iraqi ministry, suggested the establishment of a Saudi-Iraqi coordination council.

More Details:

<http://www.iraqinews.com/baghdad-politics/saudis-propose-coordination-panel-iraq-following-delegations-visit/>

- **Mass Grave Discovered in Northern Iraq**

A mass grave containing a number of victims of a mass killing of over 1,500 Shi'ite Iraqi Air Force cadets by the Islamic State (IS) militants was uncovered by the Iraqi authorities on Sunday. "Officials of the Forensic Medical Department, Ministry of Health, Martyrs Organization and civil society organizations discovered a new mass grave containing the remains of Camp Speicher victims," said the head of the Forensic Department, Zayd Ali.

More Details:

<http://www.basnews.com/index.php/en/news/iraq/335995>

- **Tony Blair's appearance at memorial honouring Iraq and Afghanistan war heroes a slap in the face to families**

At last we have an impressive memorial to those who served and died in the Iraq and Afghanistan wars. The stone and bronze sculpture, -unveiled by the Queen on Thursday, honours both our armed forces and -civilians – like my fellow journalist Rupert Hamer, 39, who was -murdered by a Taliban

bomb in 2010 while covering the conflict in Afghanistan. Rupert's wife and three -children were robbed of a wonderful husband and -father and we lost a brilliant, kind and -generous colleague.

More Details:

[http://www.shafaaq.com/en/En\\_NewsReader/7e7eb9a7-07fd-4547-8f32-95c6e88cc05a/Tony-Blair-s-appearance-at-memorial-honouring-Iraq-and-Afghanistan-war-heroes-a-slap-in-the-face-to-families](http://www.shafaaq.com/en/En_NewsReader/7e7eb9a7-07fd-4547-8f32-95c6e88cc05a/Tony-Blair-s-appearance-at-memorial-honouring-Iraq-and-Afghanistan-war-heroes-a-slap-in-the-face-to-families)

- **U.S. Secretary Tillerson meets with Iraq's oil minister in Washington**

U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson met with Iraqi Oil Minister Jabbar al-Luaibi at the State Department on Friday. Al-Luaibi did not comment on questions from reporters about U.S. oil investment in Iraq. "Mr. Minister, are there plans to expand U.S. oil investment in Iraq?" one reporter asked. Tillerson extended a handshake to the minister and said, "welcome." Reporters were then quickly escorted from the room.

More Details:

[http://www.pukmedia.com/EN/EN\\_Direje.aspx?Jimare=39949](http://www.pukmedia.com/EN/EN_Direje.aspx?Jimare=39949)

- **Five foreign ISIS snipers killed in shelling on Ashur Hotel**

Five foreign ISIS snipers were killed by US-led Coalition's aerial bombardment on Ashur Hotel on the banks of Tigris River. US-led Coalition fighter jets carried out precise attacks that targeted ISIS snipers who were barricaded in Ashur Hotel, killing five snipers from Russian and German nationalities, a security source said on Sunday.

More Details:

<http://www.thebaghdadpost.com/en/story/8033/Five-foreign-ISIS-snipers-killed-in-shelling-on-Ashur-Hotel>

- **Iraqi forces repel ISIS infiltration attempts in Mount Makhoul**

ISIS terrorists made several attempts days ago to break into Iraqi hilltop positions. The terrorists were then targeted with anti-tank guided missiles and mortar fire, which repelled the offensive. The videos were filmed by members of Iraq's Popular Mobilization Units in their tour of duty in the Jabal Makhoul area.

More Details:

<https://www.almasdarnews.com/article/video-iraqi-forces-repel-isis-infiltration-attempts-mount-makhoul/>

- **Over 40% of IS-Controlled Mosul Retaken, Iraq Says**

Iraqi forces have retaken more than 40% of Islamic State-controlled Mosul as part of an ongoing campaign to drive the militant organization from its last key stronghold in the country, a senior commander said on Sunday. Lieutenant-General Talib Shaghathi, the chief of the elite anti-terrorism service, said that 40 to 50% of western Mosul has been "liberated" less than a month after Iraq started a US-backed offensive against Islamic State there.

More Details:

[http://www.lse.co.uk/AllNews.asp?code=eusqikqo&headline=Over\\_40\\_of\\_ISControlled\\_Mosul\\_Retaken\\_Iraq\\_Says](http://www.lse.co.uk/AllNews.asp?code=eusqikqo&headline=Over_40_of_ISControlled_Mosul_Retaken_Iraq_Says)

- **Troops Move Further into Mosul; 74 Killed in Iraq**

Fighting continued in Mosul on Sunday. Iraqi troops entered the Old City, where the battle is expected to be the most difficult due to the geography of the neighborhoods. However, Major General Maan al-Saadi believes that the Islamic State militants have lost their resolve and the city could fall quickly now. About a third of the western half of the city — 17 of 40 districts — has been captured so far. It took 100 days to capture the eastern half. A new mass grave believed to contain the remains of victims of the Camp Speicher massacre has been discovered.

More Details:

<http://original.antiwar.com/updates/2017/03/12/troops-move-further-into-mosul-74-killed-in-iraq/>

- **Efforts to privatize electricity face resistance in Iraq**

In a meeting held Feb. 21, Najaf's provincial council followed in the footsteps of Dhi Qar, Muthanna, Wasit and Diwaniyah and voted against the privatization of the electricity sector in the province. Meanwhile, the Iraqi government insists on privatizing the distribution of electricity in all Iraqi regions, despite popular protests against this decision, which many believe harms the poor, who make up 30% of the country's population.

More Details:

<http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2017/03/electricity-iraq-private-najaf-general-electric.html>

- **Iraq Museum loans retrieved artefacts for the first time for the Iraq Pavilion at Venice Biennale**

The Ruya Foundation announced further details for the National Pavilion of Iraq at the 57th Venice Biennale in May 2017. The exhibition, 'Archaic', will show the work of eight Modern and contemporary Iraqi artists in dialogue with 40 ancient Iraqi artefacts drawn from the Iraq Museum

and spanning six millennia, from the Neolithic Age to the Neo-Babylonian Period. Most of these objects have never left Iraq, excluding a few that were recently recovered after the 2003 lootings of the Museum. The exhibition will also be accompanied by a new commission by internationally acclaimed Belgian-born artist Francis Alÿs on the subject of war and the artist. ‘Archaic’ will be the third occasion on which the Ruya Foundation has commissioned the National Pavilion of Iraq at Venice.

More Details:

[http://artdaily.com/news/94001/Iraq-Museum-loans-retrieved-artefacts-for-the-first-time-for-the-Iraq-Pavilion-at-Venice-Biennale#.WMZJr2\\_yjcs](http://artdaily.com/news/94001/Iraq-Museum-loans-retrieved-artefacts-for-the-first-time-for-the-Iraq-Pavilion-at-Venice-Biennale#.WMZJr2_yjcs)

- **America IS militant ‘surrenders’ to Kurds in Iraq**

US officials are checking reports that an American member of the so-called “Islamic State” group (IS) has been held in northern Iraq. The fighter gave himself up when he was approached near the town of Sinjar on Monday morning, an Iraqi Kurdish general said.

More Details:

<http://thenationonlineng.net/america-militant-surrenders-kurds-iraq/>

- **Iraq: 23 killed in Mosul clashes**

At least 23 people were killed Sunday in deadly clashes between Iraqi forces and Daesh militants in western Mosul amid an ongoing offensive to dislodge the terrorist group from the northern city, according to a local police officer. “Our forces are engaged in fierce battles against Daesh militants since morning,” Police Captain Yahya Abbas al-Talibi told Anadolu Agency.

More Details:

<http://aa.com.tr/en/middle-east/iraq-23-killed-in-mosul-clashes/769758>

- **Mass Grave of Shi'ite Inmates Killed by ISIS Found in Iraq**

The remains of hundreds of mainly Shi'ite inmates killed by Islamic State militants (ISIS) when they overran a prison in northern Iraq more than two years ago have been unearthed by forces retaking the area from the group, a spokesman said. An Iraqi Shi'ite paramilitary group made the discovery after driving the militants from the Badush area where the prison is located, as part of a wider U.S.-backed campaign to dislodge ISIS from the city of Mosul.

More Details:

<http://europe.newsweek.com/mass-grave-shiite-inmates-killed-isis-iraq-566835?rm=eu>



- **ISIL Dispatches Fresh Forces from Iraq to Northeastern Syria**

The ISIL terrorist group has sent more fresh forces to Southern Hasaka to carry out a large-scale operation against the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) in the region, a local source said Sunday. The source said that ISIL's governor in the town of Merkadeh in Southern Hasaka had called on the terrorist group's command in Iraq to dispatch more fighters to Merkadeh to take part in an imminent operation against the SDF.

More Details:

<http://en.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13951222000343>

- **Duchess welcomes troops returning home from Iraq**

Serving soldiers of 4th Battalion, The Rifles based at Aldershot were given a royal welcome home by The Duchess of Cornwall last week. The homecoming parade was held at Normandy Barracks on Monday, February 27, for soldiers who have recently returned from deployment in Iraq.

More Details:

<http://www.farnhamherald.com/article.cfm?id=117719>

- **Iraq's oil ministry: No information on Kurdistan oil revenue due to lack of access**

The Iraqi Ministry of Oil announced that a lack of access to monitor the Kurdistan Region's oil production has resulted in the ministry not having any information regarding oil revenue from independent sales undertaken by the regional government. In a letter seen by a Kurdish member of the Iraqi Parliament, the ministry said "We do not have any information concerning revenue of oil sold by the Kurdistan Region."

More Details:

<http://ekurd.net/iraq-kurdistan-oil-access-2017-03-12>

- **US-Led Coalition, NATO Training Kurdish Peshmerga Forces in Northern Iraq**

Peshmerga military units related to the Kurdish National Council (ENKS) are trained by NATO and United States-led international coalition instructors to fight against Daesh terrorists, council representative Kawa Azizi said. According to Azizi, all operational costs for Peshmerga forces are paid by the government of Iraqi Kurdistan.

More Details:

<https://sputniknews.com/middleeast/201703121051493712-us-nato-training-peshmerga/>

- **Iraq watches for chemical weapons**

Iraqi UN Ambassador Mohamed Ali Alhakim said on Friday there was "no evidence" that Islamic State had used chemical weapons in Mosul, where the militants are fighting off an offensive by US-backed Iraqi forces. Mr Alhakim said he spoke with officials in Baghdad at midday on Friday and "there was really no evidence that Daesh has used this chemical weapon." Daesh is another name for Islamic State. The United Nations said last Saturday that 12 people, including women and children, had been treated for possible exposure to chemical weapons agents in Mosul since March 1.

More Details:

<http://www.fijitimes.com/story.aspx?id=392516>

- **Iraq unsure if UN help needed to probe Daesh crimes**

Iraq is assessing what help it might need to collect and preserve evidence of Daesh crimes, but has not yet decided whether it needs United Nations assistance, the country's UN Ambassador, Mohamed Ali Alhakim, said on Friday. Britain is drafting a UN Security Council resolution to establish a UN investigation to collect and preserve evidence for future prosecution, but would like Iraq to approve such a move by sending a letter formally requesting council action.

More Details:

<http://gulftoday.ae/portal/6dd7010a-dc8a-462c-9dca-cdf382342d16.aspx>

- **Iraq's pro-government forces discover mass grave in Mosul**

Iraqi paramilitary forces said Saturday that they had uncovered a mass grave with the bodies of hundreds of people who were executed by "Islamic State" (IS) militants at Badush prison near Mosul. It is the latest discovery in Iraq as the country's paramilitary forces continue to take back territory captured by IS three years ago. Iraqi forces have uncovered dozens of mass graves containing hundreds, if not thousands, of bodies, as they push back IS forces after more than two years of heavy fighting, including the current initiative to retake Mosul.

More Details:

<http://www.dw.com/en/iraqs-pro-government-forces-discover-mass-grave-in-mosul/a-37906857>

- **Fear and hunger in Iraq's west Mosul**

The luckiest of west Mosul's residents under Islamic State group rule had tomato concentrate. Potatoes were an almost unheard-of luxury. In parts of Iraq's war-torn second city seized this week by Iraqi forces, hundreds of residents queued up behind a government truck as they waited for their first proper meal in weeks.

More Details:

<http://www.digitaljournal.com/news/world/fear-and-hunger-in-iraq-s-west-mosul/article/487663>

## 2. SYRIA

- **EU wrong policies towards Syria spread terrorism**

Talks during the meeting dealt with the latest developments in Syria, the European Union's policies towards the terror war targeting the Syrian people, and the prospects of finding effective solutions for ending this war.

More Details

<http://en.mehrnews.com/news/124197/EU-wrong-policies-towards-Syria-spread-terrorism>

- **Letter to My Friend in Damascus**

I am afraid to ask you you're feelings about the recently announced American invasion into your country. In our talks these past months, we've spoken only about hardships: the increasing scarcity of electricity, water and food shortages, an absence of home heating fuel. This in the capital, Damascus, where people can still go to school and to work, where some local buses can navigate through the mud and debris, where drivers can sometimes find petrol for their cars.

More Details

<http://www.counterpunch.org/2017/03/13/letter-to-my-friend-in-damascus/>

- **Violence against Syrian children at its worst**

Violence against children in war-ravaged Syria was "at its worst" in 2016, the UN's children's agency said Monday as the conflict nears its seventh year. UNICEF said that cases of children being killed, maimed, or recruited into armed groups were the "highest on record" last year.

More Details

<http://news.iafrica.com/worldnews/1046269.html>

- **Majority of Aleppo to Receive Restored Water Supply in Upcoming Days – Governor**

Restoration works at the water pumping station for the Syrian city of Aleppo, located at the village of al-Khafsa, are ongoing, with water supply expected to be recovered later in the week, the Aleppo province's governor, Hussein Diyaab, said Monday. On Tuesday, the Syrian army regained control of

the water tower in al-Khafs, a village situated east of Aleppo, which had been under control of the Daesh terrorist group, outlawed in many countries, including Russia.

More Details

<https://sputniknews.com/middleeast/201703131051514840-aleppo-water-supply/>

- **Syria Destruction 'On a Scale Not Seen Since World War Two'**

The scale of destruction in Syria is on a level not seen since the Second World War, a charity head has said. Red Cross chief executive Mike Adamson likened the damage caused during the ongoing civil war to the aerial bombardment of London and Dresden more than 70 years ago.

More Details

<http://www.forces.net/news/syria-destruction-scale-not-seen-world-war-two>

- **French humanitarian claims White Helmets complicit in Syria's ongoing war against ISIS**

A French humanitarian worker who spent the past year reporting in Syria claims the White Helmets are complicit in the ongoing atrocities occurring as a result of the country's inter-rebel conflict.

More Details

<http://www.9news.com.au/world/2017/03/13/16/12/french-humanitarian-claims-white-helmets-complicit-in-syrias-ongoing-war-against-isis>

- **US forces in Syria are 'invaders': Assad**

Syria's President Bashar al-Assad called US military action in Syria as "invaders" because he hadn't given permission for them to enter the country. According to CNN, Assad added that there's been no "concrete action" from the Trump administration toward ISIS.

More Details

<http://www.aninews.in/newsdetail-NA/MzAzOTU4/us-forces-in-syria-are-039-invaders-039-assad.html>

- **IRGC Rejects Baseless Claims about Its Military Base in Syria**

On Sunday, Breitbart News online outlet reported that Tehran was close to reaching an agreement with Syrian President Bashar Assad on establishing its naval base in Syria as a payment for Iranian support during the six years of the civil war.

More Details

<http://ifpnews.com/coverage/2017/03/irgc-rejects-military-base-syria/>

- **Raqqa: Coalition airstrikes kill 22**

At least 22 civilians were killed and scores injured in US-led coalition airstrikes on Daesh stronghold of Raqqa, local sources and a monitor said Sunday. “International coalition warplanes hit a school complex overnight in the village of Kassrat, south of Raqqa, housing displaced people from Aleppo province, killing 17 civilians, mostly women and children,” local activist group Raqqa is Being Slaughtered Silently said.

More Details

<http://www.albawaba.com/news/raqqa-coalition-airstrikes-kill-22-948988>

- **Iran Refutes Media Allegations on Plans to Set Military Base in Syria**

Tehran is not planning to establish a military base in the Syrian province of Latakia despite media allegations, Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) Deputy Commander for political affairs Brig. Gen. Rasul Sanayee Rad said Monday. On Sunday, Breitbart News online outlet reported that Tehran was close to reaching an agreement with Syrian President Bashar Assad on establishing its naval base in Syrian Latakia as a payment for Iranian support during the six years of the civil war.

More Details

<https://sputniknews.com/middleeast/201703131051512464-iran-refutes-base-syria/>

### 3. IRAN

- **Iran, Finland Removing Banking Hurdles**

A task force comprising Iranian and Finnish bank executives and experts, which was formed to remove bilateral banking hurdles, has already made headway, said the ambassador of the Scandinavian nation to Iran.

More Details

<https://financialtribune.com/articles/economy-business-and-markets/61356/iran-finland-removing-banking-hurdles>

- **Zarif accuses Netanyahu of ‘distorting Torah’, says Persians saved the Jews 3 times**

On Saturday, Netanyahu visited a synagogue, where he told children celebrating the holiday that Iran seeks to kill the Jews just as the Persians did. Purim started Saturday night, with costumes and street parties around Israel.



More Details

<http://realiran.org/zarif-accuses-netanyahu-of-distorting-torah-says-persians-saved-the-jews-3-times/>

- **Netanyahu faking history, falsifying Torah to sell bigoted lies against Iran**

Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif says Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has resorted to fake history and falsifying the Torah to sell lies against Iran. Zarif made the comment on his official Twitter account on Sunday in response to claims made by Netanyahu that Iran had been trying to “destroy the Jewish people” for some 2,500 years.

More Details

<http://www.presstv.com/Detail/2017/03/12/514107/iran-zarif-netanyahu-torah>

- **Zarif, Larijani slam Netanyahu for forging history**

FM Javad Zarif and Parliament Speaker Ali Larijani condemned Benjamin Netanyahu on distorting the history for saying that Iran sought the annihilation of the Jews just as had ancient Persia. Calling his remarks a “fake story”, Zarif wrote on his Twitter account that “to sell bigoted lies against a nation which has saved Jews 3 times, Netanyahu resorting to fake history and falsifying Torah. Force of habit.”

More Details

<http://en.mehrnews.com/news/124195/Zarif-Larijani-slam-Netanyahu-for-forging-history>

- **Government wants direct payment method for Indonesia-Iran trade deals**

The government is seeking a bilateral agreement with Iran to establish a direct payment method in trade deals without having to use the banking services of the third countries, such as the United Arab Emirates, Turkey and Malaysia.

More Details

<http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2017/03/13/govt-wants-direct-payment-method-for-indonesia-iran-trade-deals.html>

- **Why Iran Regime's Revolutionary Guards (IRGC) Should Be Blacklisted?**

Harassment of U.S. Naval forces by Iranian forces in international waters of the Persian Gulf reveals that Iran’s leadership is prepared to test the new administration: on its publicly stated commitment to confront Iran when it fails to meet its obligations under the JCPOA (the Joint Comprehensive Plan

of Action), when it violates United Nations sanctions, or when it engages in destabilizing activities in the region.

More Details

<http://www.ncr-iran.org/en/news/terrorism-fundamentalism/22351-why-iran-regime-s-revolutionary-guards-irgc-should-be-blacklisted>

- **Iran conditions death penalty for drug offenses**

MP Yahya Kamalipour told MNA that the judiciary needs to report to the Parliament the figures related to those sentenced to death and the severity of their crimes, after which the Parliament would be able to make the necessary decisions on revising the bill on capital punishment.

More Details

<http://en.mehrnews.com/news/124196/Iran-conditions-death-penalty-for-drug-offenses>

- **Ties between Iran, Arab nations benefit Islamic world: Former diplomat**

Hadi Khosroshahi who formerly served as the head of Iran's interests section in Egypt made the remarks in an article appeared in Monday edition of Tehran-based English newspaper Iran Daily on March 13.

More Details

<http://www.irna.ir/en/News/82462583/>

- **Investment in Iran rising: Slovakian envoy**

In a meeting with Head of Iran-Slovakia Parliamentary Group Mehdi Farshadan on Sunday, the ambassador evaluated bilateral ties as positive, hoping that relations would further improve following the removal of sanctions and settlement of banking problems.

More Details

<http://www.irna.ir/en/News/82462504/>

- **Saudi Minister Speaks of US-Israel War Against Iran, Hizbullah**

Saudi Foreign Minister Adel al-Jubeir has reportedly said that the United States and Israel plan to wage a war against Iran and Hizbullah, al-Joumhouria daily reported on Monday. During a visit to Iraq in February, al-Jubeir spoke of a future war that Washington and Tel Aviv intend to wage against Iran and Hizbullah, the daily quoted unnamed sources on condition of anonymity.

More Details

<http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/226843-saudi-minister-speaks-of-us-war-against-iran-hizbullah>

#### 4. ISRAEL – PALESTINE

- **Stabbing attack on Purim in Jerusalem**

As Jerusalem celebrates the festival of Purim, Jabel Mukaber resident approaches the Lions' Gate in the Old City before stabbing and moderately wounding two Israel Border Police soldiers at a military guard post; After a brief scuffle, one of the victims manages to pull off a shot, killing the terrorist.

More Details:

<http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-4934493,00.html>

- **. Palestinian forces use live fire against protesters opposing the PA in Duheisha**

Clashes erupted between Palestinian Authority (PA) security forces and demonstrators at Duheisha refugee camp in the occupied West Bank district of Bethlehem on Sunday evening, as locals reported that police were shooting live fire towards Palestinian youths.

More Details:

<http://www.maannews.com/Content.aspx?id=775918>

- **Trump pursues Israel's 'long-term' desire by inviting Abbas**

US President Donald Trump's invitation of Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas to the White House is part of an agenda to pursue Israel's "long-term" goal to push Palestinians out of their lands, an analyst says.

More Details:

<http://www.presstv.com/Detail/2017/03/13/514115/Trump-pursuing-Israels-longterm-desire>

- **Palestinian families prevent Israeli settlers from breaking into Hebron kindergarten**

Palestinian families and activists reportedly prevented a number of Israeli settlers from raiding a kindergarten in the occupied West Bank city of Hebron on Sunday.

More Details:

<http://www.maannews.com/Content.aspx?ID=775909>

- **UN Warns of Humanitarian Impact of Israeli Colonization in Palestine**

The establishment and expansion of Israeli settlements are a source of vulnerability in the Palestinian population, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) warned today.

More Details:

<http://www.plenglish.com/index.php?o=rn&id=10333&SEO=un-warns-of-humanitarian-impact-of-israeli-colonization-in-palestine>

- **Israel bars entry to British activist because of boycott support**

Israel denied entry to a British pro-Palestinian activist a week after the Knesset passed a law banning entry to foreigners who support boycotting the Jewish state.

More Details:

<http://www.jta.org/2017/03/12/news-opinion/israel-middle-east/israel-bars-entry-to-british-activist-because-of-boycott-support>

- **Israeli forces detain 7 Palestinians in predawn raids**

Israeli forces detained at least seven Palestinians during predawn raids Sunday across the occupied West Bank. According to a statement from the Palestinian Prisoner's Society (PPS), three were detained from the central occupied West Bank district of Ramallah, identified as 28-year-old journalist Musab Ibrahim Said, Usama Fuqaha, and a 24-year-old woman, Batul al-Ramahi.

More Details:

<http://www.maannnews.com/Content.aspx?ID=775901>

- **Thousands of Palestinians demonstrate against ban of Adhan in Al-Jalil**

Occupied Jerusalem: Thousands of Palestinians took part in a demonstration organized by the High Follow-Up Committee for Arab Citizens of Israel in Al-Jalil, Palestine 48, in protest of the Israeli law banning the Adhan (Muslim call to prayer).

More Details:

<http://thepeninsulagatar.com/article/12/03/2017/Thousands-of-Palestinians-demonstrate-against-ban-of-Adhan-in-Al-Jalil>

- **Palestinians accuse Israel of setting up obstacles to harm peace bid**

Palestinian Ministry of Foreign Affairs said Sunday that Israel is putting obstacles on the ground, ahead of the upcoming visit to Israel by U.S. President Advisor Jason Greenblatt.

More Details:

[http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-03/12/c\\_136123002.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-03/12/c_136123002.htm)

- **Kazakhstan extends cooperation with Israel on key economy fields**

Kazakhstani delegation has paid a working visit to Israel, reports the Ministry of Finance.

More Details:

<http://www.kaztag.kz/en/news/detail.php?ID=528531>

## 5. JORDAN and LEBANON

- **20 Years on, a Thorn in Jordan's side is Removed**

During his prison term, Daqamseh expressed pride for his actions and was publicly praised by his mother. Even Hussein Mejalli, Jordan's justice minister at the time, called him a hero.

More Details:

<http://www.jpost.com/Middle-East/20-years-on-a-thorn-in-Jordans-side-is-removed-484012>

- **Jordanian soldier convicted of killing Israeli girls is released**

A Jordanian soldier who was convicted of killing seven Israeli girls has been released after serving his sentence, according to his family.

More Details:

<http://www.albawaba.com/news/jordanian-soldier-convicted-killing-israeli-girls-released-948858>

- **Jordan, EU sign financing agreement on cross-border cooperation**

Jordan and the European Union Sunday signed a financing agreement on the implementation of the Cross-Border Cooperation (CBC) "Mediterranean Sea Basin" Programme, funded in the framework of the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI).



More Details:

[http://www.petra.gov.jo/Public\\_News/Nws\\_NewsDetails.aspx?lang=2&site\\_id=1&NewsID=292993&CatID=13](http://www.petra.gov.jo/Public_News/Nws_NewsDetails.aspx?lang=2&site_id=1&NewsID=292993&CatID=13)

- **Lebanon seeks to deepen relations with Pakistan: Ambassador Mona**

Islamabad: Ambassador of Lebanon Mona el Tannir has said bilateral relations between Pakistan and Lebanon are consolidating over time. “The OIC standing committee on scientific cooperation (COMSTECH) shows the level of importance that Lebanon attaches to its relations with Pakistan being a very important country.”

More Details:

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/191998-Lebanon-seeks-to-deepen-relations-with-Pakistan-Ambassador-Mona>

- **Lebanon appoints four banks for \$1.5B Eurobond issue**

Lebanon's Finance Ministry has designated Barclays, Byblos Bank, Societe Generale de Banque au Liban and JPMorgan to co-manage the issuance of \$1.5 billion in eurobonds to finance the public debt.

More Details:

<http://www.albawaba.com/business/lebanon-appoints-four-banks-15b-eurobond-issue-948660>

- **The Coming Clash: Why Israel Seeks a Third War on Lebanon?**

At a time when it's pretty much clear that Hezbollah is fighting against ISIL and Al-Qaeda in Syria, the Zionist regime of Israel says another illegal war against Lebanon is coming to a theatre near you.

More Details:

<http://en.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13951222001126>

- **Chinese peacekeepers to Lebanon awarded UN Peace Medal of Honor**

The 410 members of the 15th Chinese peacekeeping force to Lebanon were conferred the United Nations (UN) Peace Medal of Honor on March 8 local time.

More Details:

<http://en.people.cn/n3/2017/0313/c90000-9189717.html>

- **With Lebanon No Longer Hiding Hezbollah's Role, Next War Must Hit Civilians Where It Hurts, Israeli Minister Says**

Naftali Bennett and Lebanese president agree: There's no line between Hezbollah and Lebanese state. Lebanese must realize another war with Israel means Lebanon will be sent back to Middle Ages, Bennett tells Haaretz.

More Details:

<http://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/1.776419>

- **Hezbollah, Syrian Army to withdraw from border area if Syrian rebels agree to fight ISIS**

In a bid to resolve several years of deadlock in the mountainous West Qalamoun region, Moscow offered local rebel factions on the border between Syria and Lebanon a deal which would have the Syrian Arab Army (SAA) and Hezbollah (Lebanese paramilitary) withdraw from its checkpoints in the area if opposition groups agree to expel ISIS insurgents.

More Details:

<https://www.almasdarnews.com/article/hezbollah-syrian-army-withdraw-border-area-syrian-rebels-agree-fight-isis/>

## 6. ARABIAN PENINSULA AND THE GULF OF BASRA

- **Bahrain holds talks with Oman, Egypt, and Jordan during ITB**

Zayed bin Rashid Al Zayani, Bahrain's minister of Industry, Commerce, and Tourism, held talks with his Omani counterpart Ahmed bin Nasser Al Mehrzi during ITB held in Berlin, discussing further development of tourism ties between both countries.

More details:

[http://www.tradearabia.com/news/TTN\\_321867.html](http://www.tradearabia.com/news/TTN_321867.html)

- **Tehran, Muscat ink banking MoU**

A cooperation agreement has been signed between central banks of Iran and Oman aiming to boost banking cooperation between the two sides.

More details:

<http://en.mehrnews.com/news/124199/Tehran-Muscat-ink-banking-MoU>

- **Qatar and UNESCO sign MoU**

The State of Qatar and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation, UNESCO, have signed a Memorandum of Understanding, on Qatar's contribution in the functioning of the UNESCO Regional Office in Doha, and on the financial support provided by Qatar to UNESCO recently.

More details:

<http://wam.ae/en/details/1395302602513>

- **Sewehli makes official visit to Qatar**

Abdulrahman Sewehli, the president of the State Council, arrived at Doha today at the invitation of the Qatar government. During the two-day official visit he is expected to hold talks with the Emir of Qatar, Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al Thani, as well with Qatar's prime minister, Abdullah bin Nasser bin Khalifa Al Thani, its defence and foreign ministers, and the president of its Shoura Council.

More details:

<https://www.libyaherald.com/2017/03/12/sewehli-makes-official-visit-to-qatar/>

- **Saudi Minister Speaks of US-Israel War against Iran, Hizbullah**

Saudi Foreign Minister Adel al-Jubeir has reportedly said that the United States and Israel plan to wage a war against Iran and Hizbullah, al-Joumhouria daily reported on Monday.

More details:

<http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/226843-saudi-minister-speaks-of-us-war-against-iran-hizbullah>

- **Saudi king seeks help on diversifying economy**

King Salman and hundreds of business leaders from Saudi Arabia began talks in Japan Monday mainly expected to focus on economic ties.

More details:

<https://www.japantoday.com/category/politics/view/saudi-king-seeks-help-on-diversifying-economy>

- **Saudi deputy crown prince goes to meet Trump - agency**

Saudi Deputy Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman left Saudi Arabia on Monday for the United States for a visit scheduled to include talks with U.S. President Donald Trump, the Royal Court said in a statement carried by state news agency SPA.

More details:

<http://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-saudi-usa-idUKKBN16K06X?rpc=401&>

- **Dubai to build homes for low-income workers, renovate areas**

Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed approved the new low-income housing policy on Sunday. Dubai will create residences for low-income workers in the city, according to a new policy.

More details:

<http://www.khaleejtimes.com/news/government/dubai-to-build-renovate-homes-for-low-income-people>

- **US Hit Al Qaeda in Yemen More in One Week Than Obama Did in One Year**

Last week, the US hit Yemen more times than it did during any entire year of President Barack Obama's administration.

More details:

<https://sputniknews.com/military/201703131051512040-us-targets-yemen/>

- **Bahrainis Stage Rally in Support of Sheikh Isa Qassim**

The Bahraini people from all walks of life, once again, poured into streets in the restive town of Diraz to express their solidarity with Sheikh Isa Qassim, the spiritual leader of the Shiite majority in Bahrain, activists said.

More details:

<https://www.tasnimnews.com/en/news/2017/03/13/1353761/bahrainis-stage-rally-in-support-of-sheikh-isa-qassim-video>

## 7. EGYPT

- **Sisi seeks warmer ties with Hamas**

Sources in Gaza say Egyptian President ordered his government to open up to Hamas. Egyptian President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi has ordered his government to open up to Hamas, sources in Gaza told i24news on Sunday.

More details:

<http://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx/226575>

- **Egypt's El-Sisi meets with African reporters in Cairo**

Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah El-Sisi met with a delegation of journalists from 25 African countries on Sunday and spoke about the country's role on the continent, his office said.

More details:

<http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/64/260789/-.aspx>

- **Egypt's capital set to grow by half a million in 2017**

Cairo's population is set to grow by 500,000 this year, more than any other city in the world, adding to the pressure on an Egyptian economy struggling to recover from six years of political turmoil.

More details:

<http://in.reuters.com/article/egypt-population-idINKBN16J0CL?rpc=401&>

- **Egypt's Supreme Judicial Council rejects bill that gives president judicial appointment power**

The State Council and Judges Club have also opposed the bill, which would see top judges selected by the president rather than by seniority, but parliament will have final say.

More details:

<http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/64/260780/-.aspx>

- **Court postpones appeal of Red Sea Islands case until final report**

The State Commissioners Authority of the Constitutional Court postponed on Sunday another appeal by the government against a previous court decision that ruled on the annulment of the Egyptian-Saudi maritime demarcation agreement until the issuing of a legal report over the constitutionality of the agreement.

More details:

<http://www.dailynewsegypt.com/2017/03/12/court-postpones-appeal-red-sea-islands-case-final-report/>

- **No Confirmation on Egypt's Participation at Astana Talks yet - Foreign Ministry**

The Egyptian Foreign Ministry does not yet confirm its presence at this week's Syria reconciliation talks in Kazakhstan, Ministry spokesman Ahmed Abu Zeid told Sputnik on Monday.

More details:



<https://sputniknews.com/asia/201703131051517830-egypt-mfa-confirmation-astana/>

- **“Sinai Province” militants’ adhoc checkpoints require revision to security measures in North Sinai: Al-Arish MP**

Massive controversy surfaced on numerous social media outlets on Sunday evening in Egypt on the efficiency of the currently followed security measures inside North Sinai’s city of Al-Arish following the circulation of photos of militants from the IS-affiliated group of “Sinai Province”, while carrying out a checkpoint inside central Al-Arish.

More details:

<http://www.dailynewsegypt.com/2017/03/12/618169/>

- **UK grants Egypt \$150M loan guarantee towards economic reform efforts**

British Ambassador to Egypt John Casson signed on Wednesday a joint declaration of intent with International Cooperation and Investment Minister Sahar Nasr.,

More details:

<http://www.albawaba.com/business/uk-grants-egypt-150m-loan-guarantee-towards-economic-reform-efforts-948442>

- **The cleric and the president: Egypt’s critical power struggle**

President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi and Al-Azhar Grand Sheikh Ahmed al-Tayyeb settled a disagreement over verbal divorce in a recent meeting, but the accord does not signal an end to the ongoing struggle for power between the state and Egypt’s largest Islamic institution.

More details:

<http://www.madamasr.com/en/2017/03/12/feature/politics/the-cleric-and-the-president-egypts-critical-power-struggle/>

## 8. NORTH AFRICA

- **France wants to develop cooperation with Algeria in culture, education**

The president of the Algerian-French Parliamentary Friendship Group of the French Senate Alain Neri said Sunday, in Algiers, that his country has the willingness to develop cooperation with Algeria, particularly in the sector of culture, professional training and education.

More Details:

<http://en.aps.dz/algeria/17268-france-wants-to-develop-cooperation-with-algeria-in-culture,-education>

- **Algeria breaks ground on \$3.3B deepwater port project**

Work is set to begin on El Hamdania port in Algeria following the government approval for the new \$3.3-billion deepwater port project located close to the town of Cherchell, in Tipaza province, some 80 km west of Algiers.

More Details:

<http://www.albawaba.com/business/algeria-breaks-ground-33b-deepwater-port-project-948970>

- **Algeria condemns in strongest terms terrorist attack on police patrol in Tunisia**

Algeria has condemned Sunday in the strongest terms the terrorist attack on a police patrol in Kebili, in the south of Tunisia, expressing its solidarity with the Tunisian government and people in their fight against terrorism.

More Details:

<http://en.aps.dz/algeria/17273-algeria-condemns-in-strongest-terms-terrorist-attack-on-police-patrol-in-tunisia>

- **World Bank commits \$150 million to enhance social programs and support small enterprises in Morocco**

The World Bank's Board of Executive Directors have approved today a \$150 million financing in support of the Moroccan government's goal of modernizing its national identification system and provide financing to promote innovative startups and job creation.

More Details:

[http://africabusinesscommunities.com/news/world-bank-commits-\\$150-million-to-enhance-social-programs-and-support-small-enterprises-in-morocco/](http://africabusinesscommunities.com/news/world-bank-commits-$150-million-to-enhance-social-programs-and-support-small-enterprises-in-morocco/)

- **Morocco seizes 7.42 tons of cannabis at crossing point with Mauritania**

The Moroccan authorities said it seized 7.42 tons of cannabis late on Saturday at the Guerguarate crossing point near the border with Mauritania.

More Details:

[http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-03/13/c\\_136123244.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-03/13/c_136123244.htm)

- **Policeman killed in southern Tunisia attack**

A Tunisian police officer was killed and another was injured in an overnight ambush by four attackers in the city of Kebili, some 500 kilometers south of the country's capital.

More Details:

<https://www.alaraby.co.uk/english/news/2017/3/12/policeman-killed-in-southern-tunisia-attack>

- **Tunisia to invest 1 billion USD to produce power from renewable energy in 2017**

The Tunisian government said recently that it is expected to invest about an equivalent of one billion U.S. dollars to produce 1,000 megawatts of power from renewable energy in 2017.

More Details:

[http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-03/13/c\\_136123257.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-03/13/c_136123257.htm)

- **Year after attacks, IS threat receding in Tunisia**

One year after launching a deadly attack in the eastern town of Ben Guerdane, the threat of Islamic State militant group seems to have receded in Tunisia.

More Details:

<http://thepeninsulagatar.com/article/12/03/2017/Year-after-attacks,-IS-threat-receding-in-Tunisia>

- **Russia firm says it had armed men in Libya**

A force of several dozen armed private security contractors from Russia operated until last month in a part of Libya that is under the control of regional leader Khalifa Haftar, the head of the firm that hired the contractors said.

More Details:

<http://gulftoday.ae/portal/0a200c57-16f3-44b8-8d81-a5e9ddde6537.aspx>

- **Libya oil output said to drop as clashes shut some fields and ports**

Libya's crude output dropped 11% as clashes among rival armed groups over the last 10 days led to the closure of some of the OPEC nation's biggest oil export terminals, forcing a number of fields to halt production. Output fell by about 80,000 bpd to 620, 000 barrels since fighting broke out among armed groups began on March 3, according to a person familiar with the matter, who asked not to be identified because of a lack of permission to speak to media.

More Details:

<http://www.gulf-times.com/story/537149/Libya-oil-output-said-to-drop-as-clashes-shut-some>

## 9. AFGHANISTAN – PAKISTAN

- **Afghan forces raid Taliban-run detention center, 32 hostages freed**

A total of 32 Afghans were set free after army commandos raided a Taliban-run detention center in the southern Helmand province Sunday night, the Defense Ministry said in a statement on Monday.

More details:

[http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-03/13/c\\_136125130.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-03/13/c_136125130.htm)

- **“No One Is Allowed To Interfere In Justice, Judiciary Organs’ Affairs,” CE Abdullah**

“Rule of law is impossible without an independent justice system, thus, no one is allowed to interfere in justice and judiciary organs’ affairs,” Chief Executive, Dr. Abdullah Abdullah said on Sunday, his office said in a statement.

More details:

<http://www.bakhtarnews.com.af/eng/politics/item/27874-%E2%80%9Cno-one-is-allowed-to-interfere-in-justice-judiciary-organs%E2%80%99-affairs%E2%80%9D-ce-abdullah.html>

- **Afghanistan summons Pakistani Chargé D’affaires amid persistent tensions**

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan summoned the Chargé D’affaires of Pakistani Consulate over persistent artillery shelling and sporadic airspace violations by the Pakistani military helicopters.

More details:

<http://www.khaama.com/afghanistan-summons-pakistani-charge-daffaires-amid-persistent-tensions-02382>

- **President Ghani meets Agha Khan Foundation’s graduated doctors**

President of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, Mohammad Ashraf Ghani met on Sunday with fourteen doctors graduated after completing trainings in seven different sections with the Agha Khan Foundation, his office said in a statement.

More details:

<http://thekabultimes.gov.af/index.php/newsnational/13310-president-ghani-meets-gha-khan-foundation%E2%80%99s-graduated-doctors.html>

- **Afghan Special Forces free dozens from Taliban prison**

Afghan Special Forces have freed up to 32 people, including four policemen, imprisoned by Taliban insurgents in the southern province of Helmand, the defense ministry said on Monday.

More details:

[http://www.reuters.com/article/us-afghanistan-taliban-idUSKBN16K0QZ?feedType=RSS&feedName=worldNews&utm\\_source=feedburner&utm\\_medium=feed&utm\\_campaign=Feed%3A+Reuters%2FworldNews+%28Reuters+World+News%29&rpc=401](http://www.reuters.com/article/us-afghanistan-taliban-idUSKBN16K0QZ?feedType=RSS&feedName=worldNews&utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+Reuters%2FworldNews+%28Reuters+World+News%29&rpc=401)

- **China hopes India and Pakistan will join SCO 'as soon as possible'**

China hopes that India and Pakistan will become members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) in the immediate future, Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesperson, Hua Chunying, said on Monday.

More:

<http://tass.com/world/935125>

- **Justice Ahmed Ali Sheikh appointed SHC chief justice**

President Mamnoon Husaain on Monday appointed Justice Ahmed Ali M Sheikh as the new chief justice of the Sindh High Court on the advice of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif.

More details:

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1353962/justice-ahmed-ali-sheikh-appointed-shc-chief-justice/>

- **Afghans mass forced returns against int'l conventions**

The government of Pakistan has recently decided to use any means to expel the Afghan refugees. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the Afghans living in Pakistan are not able to step out of their homes for work.

More details:

<http://thekabultimes.gov.af/index.php/opinions/politics/13318-afghans-mass-forced-returns-against-int%E2%80%99l-conventions.html>

- **An opportunity for Pak-India ties**

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi has led the BJP to an unexpected sweep of state elections in Uttar Pradesh, a vast, bellwether electoral battleground.

More details:

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1320109/an-opportunity-for-pak-india-ties>

- **Afghan Human Rights Commission Says, “Violence Against Women Has Increased 8.6%.”**

Violence against women in addition to physical harms also causes mental trauma to its victims. The annual report of Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission released a couple of days ago indicates that violence against women in Afghanistan has increased.

More details:

<http://www.bakhtarnews.com.af/eng/social/item/27878-afghan-human-rights-commission-says-%E2%80%9Cviolence-against-women-has-increased-86%E2%80%9D.html>

## 10.TURKEY AND THE MIDDLE EAST

- **Turkey to participate in Pakistan's military parade**

Turkish troops will participate in Pakistan’s military parade on March 23, a Pakistani army official announced Monday. In a statement, Pakistani army spokesman Maj. Gen. Asif Ghafoor said a Turkish military band and a contingent of Chinese army were the only two foreign forces invited to take part in the Pakistan Day parade due in the capital Islamabad.

More Details:

<http://aa.com.tr/en/asia-pacific/turkey-to-participate-in-pakistans-military-parade/770253>

- **Egypt, Turkey discuss economic cooperation for first time since 2013 Morsi ouster**

The Egyptian-Turkish Business Council is expected to meet Sunday in Cairo for the first time since the ouster of Egypt's ex-president Mohamed Morsi, Ahram Daily website reported.

More details:

<http://www.albawaba.com/business/egypt-turkey-economy-2013-morsi-ouster-948814>

*\*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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