



MIDDLE EAST DAILY BULLETIN

GÜNLÜK ORTADOĞU BÜLTENİ

Domestic Policy in the Middle East Countries

Bölge Ülkelerinde İç Siyaset

The Restructuring Proces of Iraq

Irak'ın Yeniden Yapılanma Süreci

Energy Security

Enerji Güvenliği

Economy News

Ekonomi Haberleri

Peace Process

Barış Süreci

Ethnic and Secterian Groups

Etnik ve Mezhepsel Gruplar

Non State Actors

Devlet-dışı Aktörler

Relations with the West

Batı'yla İlişkiler

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15 JUNE 2017

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1. IRAQ

- **Iraqi jets kill dozens of Islamic State militants in Tal Afar**

Dozens of Islamic State militants were killed as Iraqi fighter jets destroyed launched airstrikes destroying the militants locations in Tal Afar town, west of Mosul.

More Details

<http://www.iraqinews.com/iraq-war/iraqi-jets-kill-dozens-islamic-state-militants-tal-afar/>

- **Conjoined Twin Successfully Separated by Kurdish Surgeon**

A Kurdish surgeon Sulaymaniyah, Kurdistan Region, performed hours-long surgery to successfully separate a conjoined twin whose condition was described as life-threatening.

More Details

<http://www.basnews.com/index.php/en/lifestyle/health/357801>

- **IOM Provides Psychosocial Support for Children from Mosul**

According to IOM's Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) Emergency Tracking over 25,000 individuals have been displaced from west Mosul in the last five days alone as fighting between ISIL and Iraqi forces draw closer to the old city where an estimated 118,000 people are believed to be entrapped.

More Details

http://www.pukmedia.com/EN/EN_Direje.aspx?Jimare=40516

- **Iraqi airstrike kills 23 civilians from Mosul single family**

Iraqi security sources said 23 Iraqis from a single family have been killed in an airstrike in the Old City in Mosul, The Baghdad Post reported Wednesday. Hundreds of civilians have been killed in the Iraqi airstrikes against ISIS positions in the city. Since February 19ht, the Iraqi army, backed by the US-led international coalition, started an offensive to oust ISIS terrorists from the occupied territories.

More Details

<http://www.thebaghdadpost.com/en/story/12059/Iraqi-airstrike-kills-23-civilians-from-Mosul-single-family>

- **Iraqi Army zeroes in on total victory in Mosul with ISIS bogged down in its last two districts**

With the Iraqi Armed Forces boasting vastly superior manpower and weaponry in Mosul, it appears to be only a matter of time before the remaining ISIS garrison is defeated. On Tuesday, the Rapid Response Division, Counter Terrorism Units, Iraqi Federal Police and 9th Division managed to fully capture the Bab Sinjar residential area after storming it the day before. Thus, Iraqi forces have secured the northern perimeter of the Old City.

More Details

<https://www.almasdarnews.com/article/iraqi-army-zeroes-total-victory-mosul-isis-bogged-last-two-districts/>

- **US arrests nearly 200 Iraqi immigrants in massive deportation sweep**

U.S. immigration authorities have arrested and moved to deport 199 Iraqi immigrants, mostly from the Detroit area, in the last three weeks after Iraq agreed to accept deportees as part of a deal removing it from President Donald Trump's travel ban, officials said on Wednesday.

More Details

<http://nypost.com/2017/06/15/us-arrests-nearly-200-iraqi-immigrants-in-massive-deportation-sweep/>

- **Iraqi forces fend off huge Mosul counter-attack by Isil suicide attackers**

Iraqi forces repelled a major counter-attack by Isil fighters at dawn yesterday in a district south of the Old City of Mosul, their remaining enclave in the city, a police commander said. Dozens of Isil fighters were killed in the operation to push back the militants, many of whom wore suicide vests, the commander said.

More Details

<http://www.independent.ie/world-news/middle-east/iraqi-forces-fend-off-huge-mosul-counterattack-by-isil-suicide-attackers-35828269.html>

- **ICRC: Urban Warfare Takes Heavy Civilian Toll in Syria, Iraq, Yemen**

Urban warfare is taking root in conflicts across the Middle East, with five times more civilians in Syria and Iraq killed in cities than in rural areas over the past three years, the International Committee of the Red Cross said Wednesday.

More Details

<https://www.voanews.com/a/urban-warfare-civilian-toll-syria-iraq-yemen/3900813.html>

- **Referendum can only succeed if will of the nation is United**

A decision to set the referendum date in Kurdistan to determine the fate of the Kurdish nation in Iraq with the inclusion of Kirkuk and the all Kurdistan areas outside the Region was a crucial and brave move for all the parties that attended the meeting. It would, however, have more significance if the Change Movement (Gorran) and Kurdistan Islamic Group (Komal) had attended.

More Details

<http://www.rudaw.net/english/opinion/14062017>

- **KRG Referendum Will Harm Iraqi Kurds**

The plan by Iraq's Kurdistan Regional Government to hold a referendum on independence would be to their own "detriment", a MP said, stressing that an "integrated, stable and democratic" Iraq will serve the interest of all Iraqi peoples.

More Details

<https://financialtribune.com/articles/national/66460/krge-referendum-will-harm-iraqi-kurds>

- **ISIS used Mosul church to abuse Yazidi girls, women, Iraqi Army officer says**

In the basement of an decimated church in eastern Mosul, rubble and debris tell a gut-wrenching story of ISIS' depravity towards Yazidi women and girls. On the floor of the iconic house of worship lie tiny pieces of pink and yellow underwear and flower headbands belonging to the very young Yazidi sex slaves the barbaric terrorist group took captive.

More Details

<http://www.foxnews.com/world/2017/06/14/isis-used-mosul-church-to-abuse-yazidi-girls-women-iraqi-army-officer-says.html>

- **ISIS Weapons Capabilities Significantly Degraded in Iraq Stronghold**

American-led coalition forces have severely degraded the Islamic State's weapons capabilities in West Mosul, leaving the terrorist group reliant on small arms and human shields to conduct counterattacks, a senior U.S. general operating in Mosul said Wednesday.

More Details

<http://freebeacon.com/issues/isis-weapons-capabilities-significantly-degraded-iraq-stronghold/>

- **Russia gains a foothold in an Iraqi oil patch**

The Kurds of Iraq are going through one of their most tumultuous periods of history. On the verge of finally seeing the much-heralded independence referendum, through Erbil is doing everything it can to stay financially afloat, squash the Islamic State and expand its oil sector – and it is a pretty thin line to walk with all the events going on simultaneously

More Details

<http://www.businessinsider.com/russia-kurdistan-oil-2017-6>

- **Iraqi senior cleric shown calling for Christians to ‘convert, pay tax or be killed’**

The undated footage shows Sheikh Alaa Al-Mousawi, head of the Shia Endowment, a government body that looks after Iraq’s Shia holy sites, describing Christians as “infidels”, saying “either they should convert to Islam, or else they are killed or they pay the jizya” [a tax on non-Muslims]. When challenged, Al-Mousawi was reported to have said the video dates back three years. Other local reports say that the video is more recent

More Details

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2017/06/clerics-call-for-jihad-not-putting-off-christians-in-turbulent-baghdad/>

- **Iraq Again Outperforms S. Arabia in India Crude Market**

Iraq is gaining the edge over Saudi Arabia in the world’s fastest-growing oil consumer amid an intensifying race among producers to retain their most-prized markets. Iraq was the top crude supplier to India for a third month in May, shipping 1 million barrels a day, according to shipping data compiled by Bloomberg.

More Details

<https://financialtribune.com/articles/energy/66480/iraq-again-outperforms-s-arabia-in-india-crude-market>

- **Daesh accused of setting fire to major oil pipeline in Iraq**

An Iraqi security source yesterday accused Daesh of setting a major oil pipeline on fire. Commander of the Peshmerga forces, Kamran Mahmoud, said “the pipeline carrying oil from the Jampour fields in the province of Daquq south of Kirkuk, to the production refineries was set on fire.”

More Details

<https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20170614-daesh-accused-of-setting-fire-to-major-oil-pipeline-in-iraq/>

- **Barzani's dream of independence left for another time**

The Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) announced that it would hold an independence referendum on Sept. 25 after formally informing the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) of its intention last May.

More Details

<https://www.dailysabah.com/columns/melih-altinok/2017/06/15/barzanis-dream-of-independence-left-for-another-tim>

- **Syrian delegation in Baghdad discusses border Security**

A high-level delegation from the Syrian Defense Ministry has held talks in Baghdad with Iraqi officials on border security to coordinate the ongoing fight against the Daesh Takfiri terrorist group

More Details

<http://www.presstv.com/Detail/2017/06/14/525273/Iraq-Lieutenant-General-Othman-alGhanmi-Syria-Daesh-alBadiya>

- **Even if Raqqa and Mosul fall, Islamic State is far from finished**

Alas, the answer has to be a resounding “no”. There is increasing evidence that IS is transforming itself into a long-term insurgency in Iraq and Syria, but also developing into a movement with worldwide reach.

More Details

<http://theconversation.com/even-if-raqqa-and-mosul-fall-islamic-state-is-far-from-finished-79370>

- **Daesh Resorted to Tactics Never Seen Before to Exploit Iraqi Civilians**

The Islamic State [Daesh] terror group (banned in Russia) has used tactics never seen before against civilians trapped in the western part of Mosul, Operation Inherent Resolve Ground Forces Commander Maj. Gen. Joseph Martin said in a briefing on Wednesday.

More Details

<https://sputniknews.com/middleeast/201706141054635752-us-iraq-civilians-coalition/>

2. SYRIA

- **'Staggering' civilian deaths from US-led air strikes in Raqqa: UN**

The Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), a group of Kurdish and Arab militias supported by a US-led coalition, began to attack Raqqa a week ago to take it from the militants. The SDF, supported by heavy coalition air strikes, have taken territory to the west, east and north of the city."We note in particular that the intensification of air strikes, which have paved the ground for an SDF advance in Raqqa, has resulted not only in staggering loss of civilian life, but has also led to 160,000 civilians fleeing their homes and becoming internally displaced," Paulo Pinheiro, chairman of the UN Commission of Inquiry told the Human Rights Council, Reuters reported.

More Details:

<http://en.alalam.ir/news/1983363>

- **Qatar proud of its humanitarian efforts in Syria**

Qatar's aid to the Syrian people since the beginning of the crisis has reached more than \$2bn, said a senior official here yesterday. Its pledges and assistance in support of this cause have reached nearly \$1.6bn in the past year, said Dr Ahmed bin Hassan Al Hamadi, Secretary-General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs while addressing the opening session of the tenth meeting of the Top Donors Group for Syria held yesterday.

More Details:

<http://thepeninsulaqatar.com/article/15/06/2017/Qatar-proud-of-its-humanitarian-efforts-in-Syria>

- **Two killed, four injured in Aleppo after shelling by militants**

According to Syrian Arab News Agency (SANA), the militants attacked al-Hamadaniyeh neighborhood in Aleppo city on Tuesday night. Two children were among those who were injured due to the attack, the media outlet said, adding that some houses were damaged. The shelling carried out by the militants is yet another violation of the memorandum on de-escalation zones in Syria, the news agency noted.

More Details:

<http://en.mehrnews.com/news/125939/Two-killed-four-injured-in-Aleppo-after-shelling-by-militants>

- **US expands presence in Syrian Desert, rebels say**

US troops based in Syria's southeastern desert have expanded their footprint, rebels there say, increasing the risk of direct ground confrontation between the Americans and Iran-backed pro-

government forces. US special forces have been based since last year at Tanf, a strategic Syrian highway border crossing with Iraq, where the Americans have assisted rebels trying to recapture territory from fleeing Daesh fighters.

More Details:

<https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20170615-us-expands-presence-in-syrian-desert-rebels-say/>

- **Turkey builds 700 kilometer long wall on Syrian border**

Turkey has finished the construction of a 700-kilometer wall along its border with Syria to block terrorist infiltration into the country, with Defense Minister Fikri Işık saying a similar wall would be built on the border with Iran in the country's east. Speaking in parliament, Işık said most of the wall construction had been completed along the 828-kilometer border, Turkey's longest.

More Details:

<http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/-.aspx?pageID=238&nID=114336&NewsCatID=341>

- **IS deaths squads kill Syrians fleeing intense battle for Raqqa**

Islamic State militants in Raqqa are passing themselves off as civilians to try to avoid intensifying air strikes and shooting anyone caught trying to escape their Syrian bastion as US-backed coalition forces close in, witnesses said. At a camp for the displaced in the village of Ain Issa north of the city, people who arrived on Wednesday also said the air strikes supporting an assault by US-backed forces had inflicted widespread destruction as the battle intensified.

More Details:

<http://www.middleeasteye.net/news/deaths-squads-kill-syrians-fleeing-intense-battle-raqqa-2047777977>

- **Syria peace talks may resume in July — UN envoy**

A new round of Syria peace talks could happen next month in Geneva, the United Nations envoy said on Wednesday, following repeated failed attempts to stem the bloodshed. Staffan de Mistura told reporters at a conference in Norway that fresh negotiations aimed at ending Syria's six-year-old civil war could start at the end of the holy Muslim month of Ramadan.

More Details:

<http://jordantimes.com/news/region/syria-peace-talks-may-resume-july-%E2%80%94-un-envoy>

- **Abbas discusses with a Russian delegation establishing a coordination office Between PA and Hmeimem center**

Speaker of the People's Assembly Hadiyeh Abbas discussed with a Russian delegation headed by Rami Sadykov, the establishment of a coordination office between the Syrian People's Assembly and Hmeimim-based Russian Reconciliation Center. Abbas highly appreciated the humanitarian efforts exerted by Russia to alleviate the suffering of the Syrian people as well as the sacrifices made by the Russian forces which fight side by side with the Syrian army to defeat terrorism.

More Details:

<http://sana.sy/en/?p=108155>

- **Syria Army Seizes More Areas in Homs**

On Tuesday, Syrian troops continued to make gains against the Takfiri militants in the Badyia desert area, establishing control over the Ark Triangle area, hills overlooking it, and the Third Station in Homs province, a military source said, according to the official SANA news agency. It added that the recapture of the areas came after the Syrian government forces foiled a major attack by the militants in the Badyia.

More Details:

<https://www.tasnimnews.com/en/news/2017/06/14/1436357/syria-army-seizes-more-areas-in-homs>

3. IRAN

- **Saudis hire mercenaries to attack Iran**

Intelligence Minister Alavi stressing that Saudi Arabia sponsors terrorism in region, said 5 terrorists have been arrested in Chabahar, southeast Iran on Wednesday.

More Details:

<http://en.mehrnews.com/news/125942/Saudis-hire-mercenaries-to-attack-Iran>

- **Iran doubles nuclear electricity generation**

Iran has doubled nuclear electricity generation, an official told Trend June 14 on condition of anonymity. The official at Iran's Energy Ministry said that the country's nuclear electricity generation reached 6.71 terawatt-hours during the last fiscal year. "The figure was a little more than 3 TWh during the previous year," he added.

More Details:

<http://en.trend.az/iran/business/2766903.html>

- **Five Terrorists Arrested, Two Killed in Southeastern Iran**

Iran's security forces have managed to detain five members of a terrorist cell and kill two others in Chabahar in the southeastern province of Sistan and Balouchestan, the Chabahar governor announced.

More Details:

<https://www.tasnimnews.com/en/news/2017/06/15/1437101/five-terrorists-arrested-two-killed-in-southeastern-iran>

- **Pakistan-Iran Relations Discussed In Ankara**

Pakistan's ties with Saudi Arabia and Iran's relations with India has made the Islamabad-Tehran relations complicated, Turkey's Anadolu Agency (AA) reported Umer Karim, a doctoral researcher at Birmingham University as saying on Wednesday.

More Details:

<http://www.bernama.com/bernama/v8/wn/newsworld.php?id=1364675>

- **Saudi sentenced to prison for allegiance to Iran**

The Riyadh Specialized Criminal Court on Wednesday issued a preliminary verdict of 13 years in prison against a Saudi found guilty of pledging allegiance to a foreign country (Iran) that has shown hostility to Saudi Arabia.

More Details:

<http://www.arabnews.com/node/1115326/saudi-arabia>

- **Iran blames Saudi Arabia of "sponsoring terrorism"**

Iran's intelligence minister on Wednesday blamed Saudi Arabia of sponsoring terrorism in the region, official IRNA news agency reported.

More Details:

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-06/15/c_136366327.htm

- **Iran's plans in Syria**

Iranian news agencies have featured photographs of Major General Qassem Suleimani, commander of the Al-Quds Force, a special division of the Iranian Revolutionary Guards, together with members of the Fatimid Brigade and the Syrian army at a location on the Iraqi-Syrian border.

More Details:

<http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/News/20726.aspx>

- **Will stand by Iran, but have to protect India's interests: Dharmendra Pradhan**

Oil minister Dharmendra Pradhan on Wednesday described Iran as India's "old friend" and said New Delhi will continue to stand with Tehran but will also protect its own economic interest.

More Details:

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/will-stand-by-iran-but-have-to-protect-indias-interests-dharmendra-pradhan/articleshow/59151911.cms>

- **Qatar-Iran ties: Sharing the world's largest gas field**

As Qatar and a host of Arab nations are locked in a diplomatic dispute, analysts warn that a disruption to Qatar's gas supplies to the world could send energy prices soaring.

More Details:

<http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/interactive/2017/06/qatar-north-dome-iran-south-pars-glance-1ng-gas-field-170614131849685.html>

4. ISRAEL – PALESTINE

- **UN, rights groups slam Israel's Gaza power plan**

The United Nations (UN) and more than a dozen rights groups, including Amnesty International, have warned that longer power cuts imposed by the Israeli regime on the besieged Gaza Strip would worsen the humanitarian situation in the Palestinian enclave.

More details:

<http://www.presstv.com/Detail/2017/06/15/525338/Palestine-Israel-Gaza-mains-electricity-UN-Robert-Piper>

- **High Court Rules with AG Protests, Not Cops**

Supreme Court Justice Menachem Mazuz said Wednesday that a ban on protests near the home of the attorney general rested on a misinterpretation by the Israel Police of a ruling by the court from April.

More details:

<http://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/1.795844>

- **Washington Pressures Beirut not to Grant Hamas Leaders Residency**

The US embassy in Beirut is exerting pressure on Lebanese officials to avoid granting residency permits to Hamas officials who were lately expelled from Qatar based on a request from Washington and Tel Aviv, Western diplomatic sources told Asharq Al-Awsat.

More details:

<https://english.aawsat.com/theaawsat/news-middle-east/washington-pressures-beirut-not-grant-hamas-leaders-residency>

- **Russian Ambassador to Israel - Hamas, Hezbollah Not Terrorists at All**

The Russian Ambassador to Israel, Alexander Shein, refused to call Hamas and Hezbollah terrorist organizations but rather "radical organizations which sometimes adhere to extremist political views" in an interview on Israeli TV last week (June 9).

More details:

<http://www.jpost.com/Arab-Israeli-Conflict/WATCH-Russian-Ambassador-to-Israel-Hamas-Hezbollah-not-terrorists-at-all-496829>

- **Nz Friends of Israel Applauds Restoration of Diplomatic Ties**

The NZ Friends of Israel Association (NZFOI) applauds the restoration of diplomatic ties between New Zealand and Israel. Diplomatic ties were broken after New Zealand co-sponsored a UN resolution opposing Israeli settlement activity in Judea and Samaria (the West Bank). Israel responded by withdrawing its Ambassador to New Zealand.

More details:

<http://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/PO1706/S00211/nz-friends-of-israel-applauds-restoration-of-diplomatic-ties.htm>

- **Hamas to Increase Deployment along Egypt-Gaza Border**

A delegation of Hamas leaders' currently visiting Egypt reached a new understanding with Egyptian officials regarding security arrangements along the border between Sinai and the Gaza Strip, a knowledgeable source within Hamas told Breitbart Jerusalem.

More details:

<http://www.breitbart.com/jerusalem/2017/06/14/exclusive-hamas-increase-deployment-along-egypt-gaza-border-source/>

- **Israeli plan to double size of Qalqilya enrages settler leaders**

An Israeli plan to double the size of the Palestinian city of Qalqilya in the northern West Bank has drawn anger from settlement leaders. The plan, Channel 2 news reported Wednesday, would see 14,000 new apartments built on 2,500 dunams (617 acres) in Israeli-controlled Area C surrounding the city. It would potentially double the city's population from 50,000 to 110,000.

More details:

<http://www.timesofisrael.com/israeli-plan-to-double-size-of-qalqilya-enrages-settler-leaders/>

- **Trump administration expresses concern about humanitarian situation in Gaza**

The Trump administration said it was "concerned about the humanitarian situation in Gaza," but said its Hamas rulers were responsible. The administration held a news briefing Tuesday at the State Department in which the Israeli-Palestinian conflict was discussed.

More details:

<http://www.jta.org/2017/06/14/news-opinion/politics/trump-administration-expresses-concern-about-humanitarian-situation-in-gaza>

- **Gaza is definitely Israel's problem**

Despite the underground barrier and border fence, Gaza cannot be disconnected from Israel, and Israel cannot be disconnected from Gaza. It's time to think outside the box. Now that Abbas is breaking off ties with the strip, we must start talking to Hamas—before another round of war leads to an unnecessary disaster.

More details:

<http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-4975705,00.html>

- **Hamas crisis could present an opportunity for Israel**

While the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) constantly train and ready themselves for the possibility of a military confrontation with Hezbollah on the northern front, tension is now increasing on the southern front opposite the Gaza Strip.

More details:

<http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2017/06/israel-gaza-hamas-crisis-electricity-escalation-cease-fire.html#ixzz4k3Eo9nYp>

5. JORDAN and LEBANON

- **'Investment promotion requires sincerity by people in charge'**

His Majesty King Abdullah on Wednesday chaired a meeting with stakeholders to discuss the government's action plan to encourage investment and develop the business environment. The meeting, held at Al Husseinia Palace and attended by Prime Minister Hani Mulki and several business representatives, came as part of His Majesty's follow up on the Economic Stimulation Plan, a Royal Court statement said.

More Details:

<http://www.jordantimes.com/news/local/investment-promotion-requires-sincerity-people-charge%E2%80%99>

- **US pressured senior Lebanese officials to deny visas to Hamas members**

The US embassy pressured senior Lebanese officials to deny visas to Hamas members who had recently been expelled from Qatar. This was reported in a-Sharq al-Awsat newspaper. Qatar recently expelled several senior members of the organization following American pressure. Among the senior officials who were expelled were Salah al-'Aruri and Musa Dodin, who tried to establish the organization's infrastructure in Judea and Samaria.

More Details:

<http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-4976246,00.html>

- **Lebanese Government Approves Proportional Law, Extends Parliament Term by 11 Months**

The Lebanese Cabinet on Wednesday approved a new electoral law based on the proportional system, which divides the country into 15 electoral districts. Speaker Nabih Berri said Parliament would convene on Friday, three days before the end of its constitutional term, to vote on the law.

More Details:

<https://english.aawsat.com/theaawsat/news-middle-east/lebanese-government-approves-proportional-law-extends-parliament-term-11-months>

- **Trump's One-Note Draft Budget Puts Lebanon at Risk**

On his first trip to the Middle East last month, President Donald Trump had one overriding theme: it's time to get tough on Iran and its proxies throughout the region. No doubt, Tehran's behavior in the region is deeply destabilizing; the question is how best to contain malign Iranian actions like support for terrorist groups. Trump appears to want unrealistic swift and easy military solutions. Ironically, that focus on hard power is leading the administration to undermine the elements of statecraft that the United States will need to succeed.

More Details:

<http://nationalinterest.org/feature/trumps-one-note-draft-budget-puts-lebanon-risk-21157>

- **Lebanon likely to hold polls in 2018: Ministers**

Lebanon is likely to hold long-delayed elections in May 2018, ministers said on Wednesday, after the cabinet approved a new law for a legislative vote that has spared the country a major political crisis. The new law will extend parliament's term by almost a year until next May, avoiding a legislative vacuum when the chamber's current term ends on June 20.

More Details:

<http://gulftoday.ae/portal/d69c1264-0769-42ff-a17d-2d816c999e88.aspx>

- **Adwan: Electoral law major achievement for all Lebanese**

"The new electoral law was made in Lebanon and it is an achievement for all Lebanese. The achievement is to be able to agree with everyone to reach common grounds, and today we have done just that," said Lebanese Forces Vice-President, MP George Adwan. "The law is an achievement for all the Lebanese, not for one party or one sect. It is also the greatest achievement for the mandate which had bet on passing a new electoral law, and a victory for Prime Minister Hariri who accompanied us day and night," he said at a press conference.

More Details:

<http://nna-leb.gov.lb/en/show-news/80401/Adwan-Electoral-law-major-achievement-for-all-Lebanese>

- **Lebanon garbage crisis pollutes Mediterranean**

Lebanon's garbage crisis has sparked fresh outrage, after activists shared images of what they say is untreated waste being dumped into the sea. "They are throwing everything in the sea - directly," Paul Abi Rached, director of the Lebanon Eco Movement alliance of nongovernmental organizations, told DW. "What is happening is dangerous."

More Details:

<http://www.dw.com/en/lebanon-garbage-crisis-pollutes-mediterranean/a-36234663>

- **Lebanon's Ghassan Salamé now seen as favourite to replace Kobler**

Paris-based Lebanese academic Ghassan Salamé is the front-runner to replace current UN special envoy Martin Kobler when he leaves the job at the end of the month, high-level diplomatic sources say. According to one diplomat, Salamé, a former Lebanese government minister, is the favourite out of four candidates. His name as Kobler's successor was apparently run past UN-backed Prime Minister Faiez Serraj some days ago to ensure no objections.

More Details:

<https://www.libyaherald.com/2017/06/14/lebanons-ghassan-salame-now-seen-as-favourite-to-replace-kobler/>

- **Army chief meets UN resident coordinator**

Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Lt. General Mahmoud Abdul Halim Freihat on Wednesday, received UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Jordan Anders Pedersen. The army chief discussed with the UN official regional developments, mainly the condition of refugees and the role of the Jordan Armed Forces in this regard.

More Details:

http://petra.gov.jo/Public_News/Nws_NewsDetails.aspx?lang=2&site_id=1&NewsID=306027&CatID=13

- **Berri Says New Electoral Law Launches 'New Phase' in Lebanon**

Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri announced Wednesday that the new electoral law that has been approved by Cabinet will pave the way for a "new phase" in the country. "It was the best possible law and it will lead the country into a new phase," Berri told lawmakers during the weekly Ain el-Tineh meeting.

More Details:

<http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/231410-berri-says-new-electoral-law-launches-new-phase-in-lebanon>

6. ARABIAN PENINSULA AND THE GULF OF BASRA

- **Trump Sells Qatar \$12 Billion of U.S. Weapons Days after Accusing it of Funding Terrorism**

While President Trump berates Qatar for sponsoring terrorism at the highest levels, he is simultaneously authorizing the country to purchase over \$21 billion of U.S. weapons. One part of the deal was inked on Wednesday in Washington, D.C., when Qatar's Defense Minister met with U.S. Defense Secretary James Mattis.

More Details:

<http://en.alalam.ir/news/1983381>

- **Yemen Cholera Spiralling out of Control: Group**

A cholera epidemic raging across Yemen is spiralling out of control, with around one child falling sick every minute, an aid agency warned on Wednesday. Thousands of people could die in the coming months with up to 300,000 cases predicted, Save the Children said, adding that the infection rate had tripled in a fortnight.

More Details:

<http://gulftoday.ae/portal/d1b4f03c-080e-4167-bd6c-7847c2490d59.aspx>

- **UN Warns Gulf States to Respect Rights in Qatar Row**

The United Arab Emirates and Bahrain appear to be violating people's human rights by threatening to jail or fine them for expressing sympathy for Qatar, Zeid Ra'ad al-Hussein, the U.N. human rights chief, said yesterday. Zeid said that the four states, which have branded dozens of people and entities with alleged links to Qatar as terrorists, must respect citizens' rights.

More Details:

<https://www.dailysabah.com/diplomacy/2017/06/15/un-warns-gulf-states-to-respect-rights-in-qatar-row>

- **Iran, Oman to Boost Economic Ties**

Iran's Ambassador to Oman Mohammad Reza Nouri Shahrudi explored avenues for bolstering economic cooperation in a meeting with Omani Minister of Trade and Industries Masoud al- Sunaidy

on Wednesday. Both sides expressed pleasure over the high level of political ties, stressing the need for bolstering commercial exchanges.

More Details:

<http://www.irna.ir/en/News/82565574/>

- **Saudi Soldier Killed in Land Mine Blast in Jazan**

A soldier from the Saudi border guards was killed when a land mine exploded in the Jazan district, the Saudi Interior Ministry has confirmed. Security spokesman Maj. Gen. Mansour Al-Turki said the soldier was part of a patrol in the area on Tuesday morning when the blast happened.

More Details:

<http://www.arabnews.com/node/1115321/saudi-arabia>

- **Egypt, UAE to Allow Some Flights to Qatar**

Flight restrictions targeting Qatar as part of the Saudi-led diplomatic blockade will be relaxed, Egyptian officials have announced, following a similar statement by the UAE's aviation authority. Airlines and aircraft not registered in Egypt or Qatar will be allowed to fly between the two countries, officials in Cairo said. Independent confirmation of any relaxing of the blockade imposed last week has not yet been available.

More Details:

<https://www.albawaba.com/news/egypt-uae-allow-some-flights-qatar-986320>

- **Qatar Pulls all Its Troops from Djibouti-Eritrea Border**

Qatar said Wednesday it has pulled all of its troops from the border of Djibouti and Eritrea, east African nations that have a long-running territorial dispute which Doha had helped mediate. Qatar offered no explanation for the move, though it comes amid a diplomatic dispute with other Arab nations that have cut diplomatic ties and now are trying to isolate Qatar from the rest of the world.

More Details:

<http://www.livemint.com/Politics/7XwIUmmjSybEWsXwICVcAJ/Qatar-pulls-all-its-troops-from-DjiboutiEritrea-border.html>

- **Qatari Businesses Looking for more Investments in Turkey, Prince Says**

There is a big potential to improve economic relations between Turkey and Qatar, the cousin of Qatari Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani and the chairman of a large company has told daily

Hürriyet, adding that the Gulf country is looking to conduct more investments in the Turkish market. "We are very proud to have this strong relationship with Turkey and we hope that it will be a long relationship," said Qatari Prince Sheikh Suhaim Bin Khalid al-Thani, who also heads the Marakez Group of Companies, in an interview in Qatar on June 14.

More Details:

<http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/-.aspx?pageID=238&nID=114335&NewsCatID=510>

- **Turkey FM in Qatar: Diplomatic Efforts to Resolve Gulf Crisis Intensify**

Turkey's foreign minister held talks with Qatar's emir on Wednesday as the search for a diplomatic solution to the Gulf crisis intensified and the UN voiced fears over growing humanitarian issues in the region. Mevlut Cavusoglu called for dialogue to end the crisis, after meeting Qatar's Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani in Doha.

More Details:

<http://www.middleeasteye.net/news/turkey-fm-qatar-diplomatic-efforts-resolve-gulf-crisis-heat-1091101264>

- **Saudi Coalition Says Yemen Rebels Fired Missile at UAE Ship**

A Saudi-led coalition says rebels in Yemen have fired a missile at an Emirati ship, causing no damage but wounding one sailor. A statement early Thursday carried by the state-run Saudi Press Agency said rebels fired on the ship as it left Mokha, a strategic Red Sea port. Saudi-led forces began their war in Yemen in March 2015, battling Shiite rebels known as Houthis who hold the capital, Sanaa, with their allies.

More Details:

http://hosted.ap.org/dynamic/stories/M/ML_YEMEN?SITE=AP&SECTION=HOME&TEMPLATE=DEFAULT&CTIME=2017-06-14-22-31-46

7. EGYPT

- **Egypt debates ban on giving newborns 'Western' names**

New parents in Egypt could soon face fines or prison time for giving their kids common American names like "Mark" or "Sam," if some lawmakers get their way.

More Details:

<http://www.foxnews.com/world/2017/06/14/egypt-debates-ban-on-giving-newborns-western-names.html>

- **Hamas agrees with Egypt on tighter border security**

Egypt has reportedly offered to provide electricity to Gaza to relieve part of its humanitarian crisis in return for Hamas agreeing to several security measures.

More Details:

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/06/hamas-agrees-egypt-tighter-border-security-170614041838547.html>

- **Egypt's Sisi voices support for Iraq's war on terrorism**

Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah al-Sisi on Wednesday reiterated his country's support for Iraq in the latter's efforts to eliminate terrorism.

More Details;

<http://aa.com.tr/en/middle-east/egypt-s-sisi-voices-support-for-iraqs-war-on-terrorism/841742>

- **Egypt: Intensifying Repression of Basic Freedoms**

Egyptian authorities in recent weeks have arrested at least 50 peaceful political activists, blocked at least 62 websites, and opened a criminal prosecution against a former presidential candidate, Human Rights Watch said today. The actions are further closing any remaining space for free expression.

More Details:

<https://www.hrw.org/news/2017/06/15/egypt-intensifying-repression-basic-freedoms>

- **Egypt Pressing Hamas to Accept Fatah Strongman Mahmamed Dahlan's Involvement in Gaza**

The Egyptian government has been pressuring the leaders of Hamas to accept the official involvement of Fatah strongman Mohammed Dahlan in the Gaza Strip, an Arab intelligence source told Breitbart Jerusalem.

More Details:

<http://www.breitbart.com/jerusalem/2017/06/14/egypt-pressing-hamas-accept-fatah-strongman-mahmamed-dahlans-involvement-gaza-says-source/>

- **Egyptian parliament approves controversial island transfer**

Egypt's parliament on Wednesday approved a maritime accord with Saudi Arabia that transfers the two strategic Red Sea islands of Sanafir and Tiran to the kingdom. The approval came a day after an Egyptian parliamentary committee approved the same agreement by a majority of 35 to eight.

More Details:

<http://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx/231066>

- **Egypt and U.S.: Different revolutions, similar players**

There are at least a couple of interesting parallels between the current political dynamic in America and that which existed in Egypt in 2013 when, one year after that nation's Obama administration-supported Muslim Brotherhood president Mohammed Morsi took power, an estimated 14 million Egyptians took to the streets of Cairo, calling for Morsi to resign.

More Details:

<http://www.wnd.com/2017/06/egypt-and-u-s-different-revolutions-similar-players/>

- **Egypt central bank removes foreign currency transfer limit**

Egypt's central bank on Wednesday removed limits on international currency transfers, scrapping a \$100,000 monthly limit on individual bank transactions in a long-awaited reform intended to lure back badly needed foreign investment.

More Details:

<http://www.arabnews.com/node/1115201/business-economy>

- **Protests in Egypt over fate of Red Sea islands**

There is anger in Cairo after a parliamentary committee approved a deal to transfer two Red Sea islands to Saudi Arabia.

More Details;

http://www.euronews.com/2017/06/14/protests-in-egypt-over-fate-of-red-sea-islands?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+euronews%2Fen%2Fnews+%28euronews+-+news+-+en%29

8. NORTH AFRICA

- **Tunisia's poor population face death by terrorists**

The Tunisian armed forces found the body of Khalifa al-Sultani, a 21-year-old shepherd, in Jebel Mghila in the central governorate of Sidi Bouzid on June 3, after combing the exact area where the body of his brother, Mabrouk, was previously found in November 2015. On the same day, the Islamic State (IS) claimed responsibility for Khalifa's death. Back in 2015, IS posted a video showing the final moments of Mabrouk, 16, before he was beheaded, accusing him of cooperating with the Tunisian military services.

More Details:

<http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/en/originals/2017/06/tunisia-rif-region-terrorism-poverty.html>

- **Tunisia: IMF reminds country of its many obligations**

“To achieve a growth-friendly and socially-conscious fiscal consolidation, it will be critical to adopt and implement the 2018 tax package,” Mr. Mitsuhiro Furusawa, Deputy Managing Director, and Acting Chair said Tuesday in Washington following the IMF Executive Board discussion to approve the disbursement to Tunisia of a credit of \$ 314.4 million (787 million dinars).

More Details:

https://africanmanager.com/site_eng/tunisia-imf-reminds-country-of-its-many-obligations/?v=947d7d61cd9a

- **Helicopter crash kills 2 soldiers in SW Algeria**

Two soldiers have been killed and another injured when an Algerian gendarmerie helicopter crashed southwest of the capital, according to local media. The incident took place when the helicopter was on a routine patrol late Tuesday in Naama province's El Kasdir area, Al Nahar TV reported.

More Details:

<http://aa.com.tr/en/africa/helicopter-crash-kills-2-soldiers-in-sw-algeria/841634>

- **Algeria's Bouteflika urges spending cuts, warns on foreign debt**

Algerian President Abdelaziz Bouteflika on Wednesday ordered his government to keep reducing imports and to rationalise spending to cope with a sharp fall in oil and gas earnings, but warned against turning to foreign debt. Bouteflika, who has rarely been seen in public since suffering a stroke in 2013, appeared on state television briefly presiding over a cabinet meeting with the new government put in place last month after legislative elections.

More Details:

<http://www.nasdaq.com/article/algerias-bouteflika-urges-spending-cuts-warns-on-foreign-debt-20170614-01221>

- **Macron in Morocco on His First Official Visit Outside Europe**

In his first official visit outside Europe, French President Emmanuel Macron will arrive in Rabat on Wednesday to meet with King Mohammed VI. The visit was seen as an initiative by the new French president to stress his keenness to preserve excellent relations with the African country. In parallel, the Elysee Palace announced in a statement that Macron held a phone conversation with Algerian President Abdelaziz Bouteflika, adding that they agreed to boost their counter-terrorism cooperation and continue efforts to restore peace and stability in Libya and Mali.

More Details:

<https://english.aawsat.com/michelabunajm/news-middle-east/macron-morocco-first-official-visit-outside-europe>

- **Algeria, France urge political solution in Libya to halt terrorism**

The foreign ministers of Algeria and France on Tuesday urged Libya's rival armed factions to seek a political solution in the North African country to help stem the spread of militant groups there and potential spillover across its borders. Algeria has joined with North African neighbour Tunisia to seek support for an inclusive dialogue in Libya, where competing governments and armed supporters have struggled for control since a 2011 civil war ousted veteran leader Muammar Gaddafi.

More Details:

<http://af.reuters.com/article/topNews/idAFKBN1950R0-OZATP>

- **ICC urges for immediate arrest of Saif Al-Islam Gaddafi**

The prosecutor of the International Criminal Court, ICC, on Wednesday called for the arrest and surrender of Saif Gaddafi. Saif is wanted on war crimes charges for allegedly suppressing opposition to the rule of his father, former Libya ruler Muammar. On Sunday, Saif's lawyer said his client had been released under an amnesty law passed by parliament from prison in the eastern Libyan town of Zintan, where he had been held since 2011.

More Details:

<http://www.libyanexpress.com/icc-urges-for-immediate-arrest-of-saif-al-islam-gaddafi/>

- **Gulf dispute tops agenda of France-Morocco talks**

French President Emmanuel Macron has travelled to Morocco for a 24-hour visit for talks on battling terrorism as well as the Libyan conflict and Qatar's dispute with its Gulf neighbours. Ahead of Wednesday's visit, the French presidency said Macron would discuss with Mohammed VI the dispute between Qatar and several countries, as both Paris and Rabat are keen on mediating a solution to the crisis.

More Details:

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/06/gulf-dispute-tops-agenda-france-morocco-talks-170614203804186.html>

- **Morocco jails 28 for violence in northeastern Rif**

A court in the northeastern city of Al Hociema on Wednesday sentenced 28 people to 18 months in prison for violence in Morocco, local media reported. Aged between 18 and 25 years, the defendants were accused of violence against policemen, destruction of property, rebellion and assembly without authorization, according to le360.ma news site. Four other people were freed by the court.

More Details:

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-06/15/c_136366325.htm

- **UAE slammed for excluding Western Sahara from map of Morocco**

A Moroccan rights activist has criticised Abu Dhabi TV channel for broadcasting a map of Morocco which does not include the Western Sahara. In an interview with Quds Press, human rights activist, Ali Anouzla, described the show as a direct and immediate retaliation against Morocco for refusing to join Saudi Arabia, the UAE and other states in their boycott of Qatar.”

More Details:

<https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20170614-uae-slammed-for-excluding-western-sahara-from-map-of-morocco/>

9. AFGHANISTAN – PAKISTAN

- **China says Afghan Peace Vital for Regional Security**

China's Foreign Ministry spokesperson Lu Kang on Wednesday said that the peace and stability of Afghanistan was highly important for the development and security of the neighbouring and the regional countries. “So, we contend that any move should respect sovereignty and territorial integrity of Afghanistan and conducive to the peace process of Afghanistan,” he said during his

regular press briefing while responding to a media report about deployment of more US troops in Afghanistan.

More Details:

<https://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2017/06/15/china-says-afghan-peace-vital-for-regional-security/>

- **Afghanistan Situation is Obama's Fault, Mattis Says**

Secretary of Defense James Mattis blamed former President Barack Obama for the ongoing disaster in Afghanistan when speaking to a Senate Appropriations subcommittee Wednesday. Mattis argued that the Obama administration's decision to pull support for Afghan forces allowed the Taliban to rebuild and refocus their efforts.

More Details:

<http://dailycaller.com/2017/06/14/afghanistan-situation-is-obamas-fault-mattis-says/>

- **Afghan Air Force Targets Taliban Safe Havens in Helmand, Kill 43**

At least 43 Taliban insurgents were killed in an Afghan air forces airstrike in southern Helmand province on Wednesday, Ministry of Interior (Mol) said in a statement. The airstrike took place during the night in Marja district of the province, according to the statement.

More Details:

<http://www.toloneews.com/afghanistan/afghan-air-force-targets-taliban-safe-havens-helmand-kill-43>

- **Trump Gives Pentagon Ability to Set Afghan Troops**

President Donald Trump has delegated the authority to modify the U.S.'s troop presence in Afghanistan to the Pentagon, its chief confirmed Wednesday. The announcement comes one day after Defense Secretary James Mattis acknowledged the U.S. is "not winning" in Afghanistan, nearly 16 years after it embarked on a campaign to oust the Taliban from that country.

More Details:

<http://aa.com.tr/en/middle-east/trump-gives-pentagon-ability-to-set-afghan-troops/841890>

- **UN Chief Calls for Peace in Afghanistan**

The United Nations Secretary General, António Guterres in a surprised visit arrived in Kabul Wednesday to talk to government and people. In a video clip tweeted by UNAMA, the Secretary General in his visit after hours of landing from a displace camp in outskirts Kabul said that "It's my intention every years to play a solidarity visit in Ramadan, this is my solidarity visit to the Afghan

people they has been suffering so much.” He said that today I am also fasting to express my deep solidarity and I decided to start this visit to Afghanistan.

More Details:

<http://afghanistantimes.af/un-chief-calls-for-peace-in-afghanistan/>

- **Pakistan-Iran Relations Discussed In Ankara**

Pakistan's ties with Saudi Arabia and Iran's relations with India has made the Islamabad-Tehran relations complicated, Turkey's Anadolu Agency (AA) reported Umer Karim, a doctoral researcher at Birmingham University as saying on Wednesday. Speaking at a roundtable discussion on Iran-Pakistan relations organised by the Centre for Iranian Studies in Ankara (IRAM), Karim said that Pakistan historically has strong ties with Saudi Arabia and has also been very close to Iran.

More Details:

<http://www.bernama.com/bernama/v8/wn/newsworld.php?id=1364675>

- **Two Pak Soldiers Killed in Retaliation by Indian Army**

Two Pakistani soldiers were killed in fierce retaliation by Indian troops as Pakistan Army violated ceasefire thrice along the Line of Control in two sectors in Rajouri and Poonch districts of Jammu and Kashmir on Wednesday. The Pakistan Army resorted to shelling of mortar bombs and firing of small arms and automatic weapons on forward posts and civilians' areas in the region.

More Details:

<http://english.manoramaonline.com/news/nation/2017/06/15/two-pak-soldiers-killed-in-retaliation-by-indian-army.html>

- **Pakistan Army Chief Slams US Drone Operation**

Pakistan's military chief is sharply criticizing a suspected U.S. drone strike that killed two key Haqqani network commanders in northwestern Pakistan earlier this week. Pakistani security sources said Tuesday's pre-dawn missile attack destroyed a suspected militant hideout in the remote district of Hangu.

More Details:

<https://www.voanews.com/a/pakistan-army-chief-slams-united-states-drone-operation/3900569.html>

- **World Body Satisfied with Rights Progress in Pakistan**

The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) has expressed satisfaction with the implementation of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in Pakistan. Established under the ECOSOC Resolution 1985 to carry out the monitoring functions assigned to the United Nations Economic and Social Council, the CESCR, a body of independent experts, monitors implementation of the ICESCR by its states parties.

More Details:

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/210711-World-body-satisfied-with-rights-progress-in-Pakistan>

- **Pakistan, Indian flags Hoisted at SCO Headquarters**

The national flags of newly admitted Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) States Pakistan and India – were raised at the SCO Headquarters here on Thursday. Secretary General, SCO, Rashid Alimov, Pakistan Ambassador to China, Khalid Masood, Indian Ambassador to China, Vijay Gokhale, ambassadors of the Observer States, representative of Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, senior diplomats and officials were present.

More Details:

<http://www.app.com.pk/pakistan-indian-flags-hoisted-at-sco-headquarters/>

10.TURKEY AND THE MIDDLE EAST

- **Turkey remands 5 foreign ISIL suspects**

A court in southern Turkey remanded Thursday five foreign suspected ISIL members for being members of a terrorist organization. The four Azeri nationals, and one Bosnian for whom a red notice has been issued by Interpol, were arrested Tuesday in Kilis province as they attempted to cross into Turkey from Syria illegally. Police also recovered three kilograms of C4 type explosives, four fuses, three hand grenades, and an explosive vest in the suspects' bags.

More Details:

<http://www.worldbulletin.net/turkey/190826/turkey-remands-5-foreign-isil-suspects>

- **Qatar dispute ‘artificial’: Deputy PM**

Turkish Deputy Prime Minister Numan Kurtulmus(C) speaks at a fast-breaking iftar gathering with Ankara representatives of newspapers and TV channels in Ankara, Turkey on June 14, 2017 Turkish Deputy Prime Minister Numan Kurtulmus said Tuesday the ongoing crisis between Gulf states was “artificial”. “There is no crisis between two states, or a state and the others in the Gulf region that is

grounded in a real cause. It is a fabricated and artificial dispute,” Numan Kurtulmus, who also serves as government spokesman, told a fast-breaking iftar gathering with Ankara representatives of newspapers and TV channels.

More Details:

<http://aa.com.tr/en/turkey/qatar-dispute-artificial-deputy-pm/841730>

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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