



MIDDLE EAST DAILY BULLETIN

GÜNLÜK ORTADOĞU BÜLTENİ

Domestic Policy in the Middle East Countries

Bölge Ülkelerinde İç Siyaset

The Restructuring Proces of Iraq

Irak'ın Yeniden Yapılanma Süreci

Energy Security

Enerji Güvenliği

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Peace Process

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Ethnic and Secterian Groups

Etnik ve Mezhepsel Gruplar

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Relations with the West

Batı'yla İlişkiler

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1. IRAQ

- **Kurdish woman in Sulaimani earns certification to fly Boeing 737**

A Kurd is the first woman to pilot a Boeing 737 jet airliner in Iraq after earning her requisite certifications as an employee at Iraqi Airways.

More Details:

<http://www.rudaw.net/english/kurdistan/140520173>

- **Last dying breath': ISIL nearly eliminated in battle for Mosul**

According to US Joint Special Operations Command reports, elements of the Iraqi elite Counter Terrorism Service overwhelmed the Ureibi and Rifaie districts of Mosul in the early morning hours on Sunday, bringing the battle to reclaim the Iraqi town from ISIL extremists close to the end.

More Details:

<http://en.mehrnews.com/news/125376/Last-dying-breath-ISIL-nearly-eliminated-in-battle-for-Mosul>

- **Canadian Forces Missed Targets in Iraq 17 Times**

Canadian air missions missed their targets 17 times in Iraq, according to the latest data released by the country's Department of National Defense (DND).

More Details:

<http://www.eurasiareview.com/15052017-canadian-forces-missed-targets-in-iraq-17-times/>

- **27 IS militants killed in airstrikes in Iraq**

A total of 27 Islamic State (IS) militants were killed in airstrikes by international coalition against IS posts in IS-held areas in Iraq's western province of Anbar on Sunday, an Iraqi army source said.

More Details:

http://www.china.org.cn/world/2017-05/15/content_40814673.htm

- **Chemical Attack near Mosul; 142 Killed in Iraq**

At least 142 were killed and 34 were wounded or sickened in recent violence: In Mosul, snipers killed 64 civilians as they tried to escape across the Tigris River. An airstrike killed five militants, including a close aide to Islamic State leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. Chemical weapons sickened 26 people in Dandan and Jawzq.

More Details:

<http://original.antiwar.com/updates/2017/05/14/chemical-attack-near-mosul-142-killed-in-iraq/>

- **High Number of People Fleeing Mosul, Conditions Deteriorate**

The number of people fleeing the ongoing battle in the Iraqi city of Mosul is reaching new highs and the condition of the displaced civilians is deteriorating, an aid group said on Saturday. According to some estimates, around 250,000 civilians are still trapped in west Mosul and can only flee once the security forces enter their neighbourhoods and clear them of Daesh "Islamic State group fighters".

More Details:

<http://www.albawaba.com/news/high-number-people-fleeing-mosul-conditions-deteriorate-974266>

- **1AD HQ ready to 'get out door' on Iraq mission**

After months of training, soldiers from the 1st Armored Division's headquarters are ready to deploy and get on with their new mission. About 400 soldiers from the division's Headquarters and Headquarters Battalion, with a small contingent from Division Artillery, will deploy to Iraq in June.

More Details:

<https://www.stripes.com/news/us/1ad-hq-ready-to-get-out-door-on-iraq-mission-1.468367#.WRIYvtSLRko>

- **If you really don't worship Washington**

Leaving the most important foreign engagement of the U.S. in recent times into the hands of CENTCOM, which was involved in a scandal in Syria and Iraq in 2015, is worshipping the military in the eyes of many Americans.

More Details:

<https://www.dailysabah.com/columns/hakki-ocal/2017/05/15/if-you-really-dont-worship-washington>

- **'US military bureaucracy has made it clear it wants long-term war in Mideast'**

The global 'war on terror' first announced under President George W. Bush after 9/11 may take on a new life under President Trump, with Secretary of Defense James Mattis and National Security Advisor H. R. McMaster now promoting long-term US combat troop commitments in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria.

More Details:

<https://www.rt.com/op-edge/388328-permanent-war-us-syria-iraq-afghanistan/>

- **Syrian army sends reinforcements toward border with Iraq: rebels**

The Syrian army aided by Iranian-backed militias was moving troops to a desert region near its border with Iraq and Jordan just as U.S. backed rebels are consolidating control in an area from which Islamic State militants had recently pulled out, rebel sources and commanders said on Monday.

More Details:

http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-border-idUSKCN18B01D?feedType=RSS&feedName=worldNews&utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+Reuters%2FworldNews+%28Reuters+World+News%29&&rpc=401

- **ISIS under Iraqi fire as battle for Mosul approaches endgame**

US-backed Iraqi forces pushed deeper into the last pocket of Mosul controlled by ISIS militants on Sunday as the battle for the city approaches an end after seven months of gruelling urban combat.

More Details:

<http://aranews.net/2017/05/isis-iraqi-fire-battle-mosul-approaches-endgame/>

- **Barzani and McGurk Review Mosul Campaign**

Kurdistan Region President Masoud Barzani and Brett McGurk, the US Special Presidential Envoy to the Global Coalition to Counter the Islamic State (IS) discussed bilateral ties and the anti-IS military efforts in Mosul.

More Details:

<http://www.basnews.com/index.php/en/news/kurdistan/336185>

- **Turkish airstrikes kill 10 PKK terrorists in N. Iraq**

Turkish fighter jets pounded the outlawed PKK terror targets in northern Iraq killing 10 terrorists, Turkish General Staff said Sunday. The military statement said the counter-terrorism air raid hit terror targets in Zap and Sinat-Haftanin regions.

More Details:

<http://en.trend.az/world/turkey/2754292.html>

- **Nine security officials killed in vehicle bomb attacks in Mosul**

Islamic State militants attacked a base near the northern Iraqi city of Kirkuk on Sunday, killing two soldiers before US -led forces launched a wave of airstrikes to repel the assault, officials said.

More Details:

http://www.shafaaq.com/en/En_NewsReader/74b15c98-c9c3-4822-ac6d-ba3e9186e0f3

- **Southern front lines stalled for weeks in west Mosul**

Following the fall of the Ma'amil neighborhood in west Mosul to the Iraqi forces May 10, "only 15 neighborhoods remained under control of IS [the Islamic State] in Mosul, all of which are surrounded by the Iraqi forces," said Bashar al-Kiki, the head of the Ninevah Provincial Council. In order to manage the liberation of the remaining areas, the Iraqi joint forces announced a plan to divide the areas into different parts, each of which has been assigned to specific forces.

More Details:

<http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2017/05/mosul-iraq-is-suicide-bomb-snipers.html>

- **Post-IS Mosul faces drinking water crisis**

In the battle against jihadists in northern Iraq, the village of Sayramun was recaptured in February but remains as isolated as ever and crucially still has no drinking water.

More Details:

<http://middle-east-online.com/english/?id=83079>

- **Life in an Iraq internally displaced persons camp is crowded and dirty**

Stan Jones of Spencerville is working with a non-governmental organization operating in northern Iraq. He is writing an occasional column for The News-Sentinel. This is the latest iteration from earlier failures to present a description of life within an internally displaced persons (IDP) camp in northern Iraq.

More Details:

<http://www.news-sentinel.com/20170515/life-in-an-iraq-internally-displaced-persons-camp-is-crowded-and-dirty>

2. SYRIA

- **Terrorist Confesses to Working with White Helmets in Aleppo**

In confessions broadcast by the Syrian TV on Saturday evening, al-Hendi said that he joined the “white Helmets” three years ago in return for receiving funds from the so-called “local council” and financiers from Arab countries, SANA reported. Hendi said that they were told that there will be chemical attacks, and they were given protective clothing and they staged a fake chemical attack that was filmed by a Turkish channel, adding that they were filmed by two people called Ibrahim al-Haj and Mohammad al-Sayyed as they sounded sirens and brought stretchers to transport supposed injured people, with the intent of posting these videos online and accuse the Syrian Arab Army of carrying out a chemical attack.

More Details:

<https://www.tasnimnews.com/en/news/2017/05/15/1408419/terrorist-confesses-to-working-with-white-helmets-in-aleppo>

- **Syrian army destroys more ISIL positions in Deir Ezzor**

SANA reporter in Deir Ezzor said that army units engaged in clashes with terrorist groups affiliated to ISIL on the southern axis of Deir Ezzor city, resulting in the death of a number of terrorists, in addition to injuring others and destroying a number of their fortification points and hideouts. He added that the Syrian Air Force launched strikes on ISIL fortifications in the graveyards area, al-Hamidiyeh, Khasarat, Knamat, Hatla and Sfeira, inflicting heavy losses upon them.

More Details:

<http://en.mehrnews.com/news/125379/Syrian-army-destroys-more-ISIL-positions-in-Deir-Ezzor>

- **Syria’s ‘Geneva 6’ Talks Resume Tuesday with No Agenda**

The sixth round of Syrian peace talks kicks off in Geneva on Tuesday in the absence of a clear and specific agenda, according to an invitation received by UN Special envoy to Syria Staffan de Mistura. During the four-day talks, the delegation of the High Negotiations Committee (HNC) is expected to emphasize the political transition and humanitarian issues, said HNC member Fouad Aliko.

More Details:

<http://english.aawsat.com/caroline-akoum-and-asharq-alawsat/news-middle-east/syrias-geneva-6-talks-resumes-tuesday-no-agenda>

- **The Syrian army and US-backed rebels are consolidating control in parts of Syria formerly held by Islamic State.**

The Syrian army aided by Iranian-backed militias is moving troops to a desert region near its border with Iraq and Jordan as US backed rebels are consolidating control in an area from which Islamic State militants have recently pulled out, rebel sources and commanders say. They say intelligence shows that hundreds of Syrian troops and Iranian-backed Shi'ite militias with tanks and heavy equipment have moved to the town of Sabaa Biyar, in a sparsely populated desert territory that goes all the way to the Jordanian and Iraqi border known as the Syrian Badia.

More Details:

<http://www.sbs.com.au/news/article/2017/05/15/syria-sends-reinforcements-border>

- **More Syrian Rebels Abandon Territory Near Damascus**

At least 1,500 Syrian rebels and their families abandoned another long-held district just outside of Damascus on Sunday, as the army of President Bashar al-Assad and its allies push to seize full control of the capital and surrounding areas for the first time in nearly five years. State media and witnesses said the evacuation began at dawn, less than a day after government forces captured the Qaboun district, and just days after hundreds of other beleaguered rebel fighters and their families departed two other nearby districts.

More Details:

<http://www.voanews.com/a/more-syrian-rebels-abandon-territory-near-damascus/3851331.html>

- **US arms to YPG will not end up in PKK hands, says PYD leader**

Weapons promised to be delivered to the Kurdish People's Protection Units (YPG) by the United States will not end up in the hands of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), the leader of the main Kurdish party in Syria has said, adding that they will give "reasonable guarantees" to the Americans in this regard. Muslim said that they have have given guarantees to the Americans that the weapons do not end up in PKK hands.

More Details:

<http://www.rudaw.net/english/middleeast/syria/14052017>

- **Russian Forces Operation Aids Intra-Syrian Dialogue –Security Council**

Joint actions of the Russian Aerospace Forces and the Syrian government troops against terrorists have created favorable conditions for promoting intra-Syrian dialogue, Deputy Secretary of the Russian Security Council Mikhail Popov said. "Russian decision to send aerospace forces to Syria in

response to the appeal of the leadership of this country, was dictated by a clear understanding of the need to prevent the increase of the terrorist threat," Popov added.

More Details:

<https://sputniknews.com/middleeast/201705151053612039-russia-aid-intra-syrian-dialogue/>

- **Hezbollah dispatch Special Forces to Iraqi-Syrian borders**

According to Hezbollah al-Nujaba news website, the Special Forces have been sent to participate in the liberation and cleansing operations in Iraq's bordering regions with Syria. Hezbollah al-Nujaba forces will help the Iraqi army and Hashd al-Shaabi (Iraqi Popular Mobilization Forces) in the offensive against the ISIS terrorists.

More Details:

http://en.abna24.com/news/middle-east/hezbollah-dispatch-special-forces-to-iraqi-syrian-borders_829754.html

- **13,000 refugees flee ISIL-controlled parts of Raqqa province in 2 days**

About 13,000 refugees fled the territories of the northern Syrian province occupied by the ISIL terrorist group and came to the areas controlled by the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), the Raqqa civilian assembly committee chairperson said. "During the past two days, we have welcomed 13 thousand refugees from Meyselun and Celaa villages north of Raqqa and other villages near Raqqa," Ebdulsalam Hemsorik told the Firat news agency on Saturday.

More Details:

<http://en.mehrnews.com/news/125370/13-000-refugees-flee-ISIL-controlled-parts-of-Raqqa-province>

3. IRAN

- **US intelligence 'limited' on Iran's military might**

Brig. Gen. Massoud Jazayeri went on to add that Iran has allowed a short glimpse into its defense power for hostile countries with the US in the lead, to confound its enemies and prevent any potential invasion. "Today, the deterrence power of the Islamic Republic is based on active deterrence in way that any aggressor is reduced to annihilation and surrender," he said.

More Details:

<http://en.mehrnews.com/news/125383/US-intelligence-limited-on-Iran-s-military-might>

- **Rouhani says Friday's Iran election 'historical decision**

Iran's President Hassan Rouhani has said that Friday's presidential election will place the country at a critical juncture, and its people must choose between peace or tension. Speaking Saturday to tens of thousands of his supporters at Tehran's Azadi Stadium, his biggest campaign rally thus far, Rouhani said, "We are at the edge of a great historical decision. Our nation will announce if it continues on the path of peacefulness or if it wants to choose tension."

More Details:

<http://www.timesofisrael.com/rouhani-says-upcoming-iran-election-historical-decision/>

- **France's new govt. fully respects Iran nuclear deal**

The French ambassador made the remark in a meeting with the governor of Fars Mohammad Ali Afshani in Shiraz on Sunday. During the meeting, he stressed that France is a good economic partner to Iran and will make every effort to further expand relations with the Islamic Republic.

More Details:

<http://en.mehrnews.com/news/125377/France-s-new-govt-fully-respects-Iran-nuclear-deal>

- **A heated neighborhood**

Last Monday, Iranian General Mohammad Albaqiri, warned Pakistan of attack inside her territory to destroy what he called terrorist sanctuaries. The threat came about two weeks after Jaish ul-Adl (Army of Justice), a Sunni militant organisation, with a history of launching attacks in Siestan-Balochistan of Iran, accepted the responsibility of killing ten Iranian border guards in an attack carried out from Pakistani side of the border. Soon after the said attack Mr. Javed Zarif, the Iranian Foreign Minister paid a day-long visit to Islamabad and met top political and military leaders of Pakistan. There were reports about the tough talk of the other wise soft spoken top Iranian diplomat during his meeting with Pakistani leaders but at the end of his visit Islamabad gave the impression that the crises has been overcome by strong assurances from Pakistani side about ensuring security on the Pak-Iran border.

More Details:

<http://afghanistantimes.af/opinion-a-heated-neighborhood/>

- **Iranian Presidential Candidate Urges Action against Contraband**

Elaborating on his plans in case of winning the election at a televised program on Sunday night, Mirsalim said the imports of the foreign products that are being manufactured inside the country must be prohibited. "We need to identify the factors behind smuggling and counter them seriously,"

he added, highlighting the need for the government's support for local manufacturers to offer products at competitive prices.

More Details:

<https://www.tasnimnews.com/en/news/2017/05/15/1408375/iranian-presidential-candidate-urges-action-against-contraband>

- **Iran urges Islamic states to confront Zionist moves**

Iranian Parliament's General Director for International Affairs Hossein Amir-Abdollahian made the remarks in a meeting on Sunday, with Yasser Othman, head of Egyptian interest section office in Tehran. Noting relations and the commonalities between the two countries, Amir-Abdollahian said Iran and Egypt enjoy a number of potentials in various fields to be exploited in developing relationships and helping solve regional issues through a political solution.

More Details:

<http://en.mehrnews.com/news/125378/Iran-urges-Islamic-states-to-confront-Zionist-moves>

- **Iran's exports to EU rise by degrees**

The exports of 20 major types of goods from Iran to the European Union rose by something between 28 and 100 percent last Iranian fiscal year (which ended March 20) compared to five years before Iran and world powers implemented the nuclear deal called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). Mirhadi Seyyedi, caretaker of the Export Markets Development department of Iran's Trade Promotion Organization, said the JCPOA well managed to help Iran regain its old markets that it had lost due to sanctions, IRNA news agency reported May 14.

More Details:

<http://en.trend.az/iran/business/2754339.html>

- **Why the world is watching Iran's election**

Iran's presidential candidates are making final preparations for Friday's landmark poll, which could have hugely significant implications for the country and the world beyond. At the centre of the contest are differing views over incumbent President Hassan Rouhani's signature accomplishment: The 2015 landmark nuclear accord and his wider advocacy of economic and political re-engagement with western powers. While he is widely seen internationally as a modest favourite for re-election — not least as all Iranian presidents have won a second term since 1981 — this is by no means assured. Rouhani is most likely to prevail if he can win big — securing more than 50 per cent of the votes polled — on Friday and thus emerge victor in the first ballot, as in 2013. However, if a second round

run-off is needed between the two strongest performing candidates, more conservative opponents of the president could join forces to try to best him.

More Details:

<http://gulfnews.com/opinion/thinkers/why-the-world-is-watching-iran-s-election-1.2027186>

- **Former President Khatami calls on Iranian voters to re-elect Rouhani**

Reformist Khatami called on voters to re-elect Rouhani via a video posted online on Sunday. He praised achievements of the 11th administration, saying, "The current administration, despite facing limitations, problems, and high expectations, has managed to make great accomplishments."

More Details:

<http://www.presstv.com/Detail/2017/05/15/521915/Iran-Khatami-Hassan-Rouhani-president-elections>

- **Iran-Africa Investment Confab Planned**

In order to expand business relations between Iranian and African investors and increase trade volume, African investors will attend a conference in Iran within two months, said an advisor to Majlis speaker on international affairs. "Important economic data about Iran's businesses will be provided to participants," Hossein Amir-Abdollahian was also quoted as saying by Mehr News Agency. Iran-Africa Economic and Investment Conference will be held by the Friendship Association of Iran and Cameroon in Tehran on September 5, 2017. The conference will be attended by Iranian and African ranking officials, African countries' ambassadors to Iran and more than 600 private sector businesspeople. The conference aims to help establish banking branches, expand correspondent banking relations, sign trade agreements, identify investment opportunities and boost tourism.

More Details:

<https://financialtribune.com/articles/economy-business-and-markets/64468/iran-africa-investment-confab-planned>

4. ISRAEL – PALESTINE

- **Finance Minister told the Supreme Court 'No!'**

Israeli Finance Minister Moshe Kahlon (Kulanu) refused to accept the judges' suggestions or to change the law taxing owners of three or more apartments.

More details:

<http://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx/229646>

- **Israeli Navy Abducts Six Palestinian Fishermen in Gaza**

Israeli navy ships attacked, on Monday morning, several Palestinian fishing boats, in Gaza territorial waters, northwest of Gaza city, abducted six fishermen, and confiscated a fishing boat.

More details:

<http://imemc.org/article/israeli-navy-abducts-three-palestinian-fishermen-in-gaza/>

- **Trump Considering Effect on Peace Process Of Embassy Move To Jerusalem**

U.S. President Donald Trump is considering the effect on the Israeli-Palestinian peace process of potentially moving the U.S. Embassy in Israel to Jerusalem, his secretary of state said.

More details:

<https://www.rferl.org/a/trump-israel-embassy-jerusalem/28488469.html>

- **As Palestinian Prisoners' Hunger Strike Passes 28th Day, Health Conditions Worsen**

The Palestinian Committee of Prisoners' Affairs demanded that Palestinian prisoners who entered their 28th day on hunger strike in Israeli prisons on Sunday be hospitalized, as their health continued to decline.

More details:

<http://www.albawaba.com/news/palestinian-prisoners-hunger-strike-passes-28th-day-health-conditions-worsen-974264>

- **Palestinian President on Four-day India Visit**

Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas arrived in New Delhi late on Sunday for a four-day trip, which is seen as a diplomatic balancing act by India as Prime Minister Narendra Modi prepares to visit Israel in the coming few weeks.

More details:

<http://www.bernama.com/bernama/v8/wn/newsworld.php?id=1355984>

- **Billionaire Zionist Adelson furious at Tillerson over Israel: Report**

Republican Party mega-donor and hard-line Zionist Sheldon Adelson is reportedly furious at US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson for his comments which indicate that the Trump administration is

apparently backing out on a campaign promise to move the American embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem al-Quds.

More details:

<http://www.presstv.com/Detail/2017/05/15/521928/Billionaire-American-Zionist-furious-at-Tillerson-over-Israel-Report>

- **Israel arrests Palestinian writer Ahmad Qatamesh**

Israeli forces have carried out raids on homes across the occupied West Bank and detained at least 14 Palestinians on Sunday, among them a prominent intellectual and former political prisoner.

More details:

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/05/israel-arrests-palestinian-writer-ahmad-qatamesh-170514075840376.html>

- **Palestinians seek settlement curb if peace talks restart but don't make it a condition**

A senior Palestinian official says he "hopes" Israel will halt settlement construction if U.S.-led peace talks resume, but stopped short of making it a condition.

More details:

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2017/05/15/world/politics-diplomacy-world/palestinians-seek-settlement-curb-peace-talks-restart-dont-make-condition/#.WRIS-NSLRiw>

- **Abbas' Fatah leads local elections in West Bank cities**

Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas's Fatah party was ahead in most of the West Bank's main cities after municipal elections that highlighted persistent divisions with its rival Hamas, results showed on Sunday.

More details:

<http://gulftoday.ae/portal/4b992aea-e695-4bc3-9528-ae29e9c8b8ff.aspx>

- **Israel faces anti-establishment dissent over widening wage gap - UBS**

Israel risks stoking anti-establishment resentment if it allows the economy's technology sector to widen gaps between rich and poor, UBS Wealth Management's chief economist says.

More details:

<http://in.reuters.com/article/economy-israel-ubs-idINKCN18A0RM?rpc=401&>

5. JORDAN and LEBANON

- **Preventing extremist violence**

The causes of violent extremism in Jordan can be attributed to a complicated combination of factors, like an economy strained by the influx of Syrian refugees since 2011, high unemployment rates and a growing, radicalising, Daesh influence on some young people.

More details:

<http://jordantimes.com/opinion/samar-muhareb/preventing-extremist-violence>

- **Jordan condemns fatal shooting of knife assailant as 'heinous crime'**

The Jordanian government said Saturday that it held the Israeli government responsible for the death of Muhammad al-Skaji, a Jordanian national, reportedly of Palestinian origin, who was shot and killed earlier in the day in occupied in East Jerusalem's Old City, after he attacked an Israeli policeman with a knife.

More details:

<http://www.maannnews.com/Content.aspx?ID=777045>

- **Hariri Calls for Job Opportunities for the Arab Youth to Confront Extremism**

Lebanese Prime Minister Saad Hariri has said that the region requires stability, stressing that finding job opportunities for youth would help confront extremism.

More details:

<http://english.aawsat.com/theaawsat/news-middle-east/hariri-calls-job-opportunities-arab-youth-confront-extremism>

- **Hasbani Arrives In Cairo, Visits Who Regional Office**

Deputy Prime Minister and Health Minister Ghassan Hasbani arrived on Sunday in the Egyptian capital, Cairo, whereby he held talks with the Regional Director of the World Health Organization, Dr. Mahmoud Fikri, on the current health situation in Lebanon and the broad region.

More details:

<http://nna-leb.gov.lb/en/show-news/79227/Hasbani-arrives-in-Cairo-visits-WHO-Regional-Office>

- **Lebanese Politician Lauds True Democracy in Iran**

A Lebanese political activist described the existence of various political parties in Iran as nothing less than true democracy, saying it is incomparable with certain reactionary Arab states ruled by monarchy.

More details:

<https://www.tasnimnews.com/en/news/2017/05/14/1406914/lebanese-politician-lauds-true-democracy-in-iran>

- **Jordan: Our position against terrorism is clear**

Jordan's Foreign Minister Ayman Safadi on Sunday said that his country's position opposing terrorism was "clear to everyone".

More details:

<http://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx/229636>

- **Berri Says 'Very Important' Sunday Evening Meeting May Produce Electoral Law**

Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri has revealed that “a very important meeting” will be held Sunday evening regarding the electoral law.

More details:

<http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/229953-berri-says-very-important-sunday-evening-meeting-may-produce-electoral-law>

- **The Second Lebanon War: Failures, Lessons Learned and the Future**

In retrospection of the Israel-Lebanon war of 2006, also known as the second Lebanon war, it would be somewhat parochial to tie Israel's intelligence failures alone to the country's performance in the war.

More details:

<http://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/the-second-lebanon-war-failures-lessons-learned-and-the-future>

- **Pakistani economic delegation visits Lebanon tomorrow to clinch cooperation agreement**

The Federation of Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture in Lebanon on Sunday said in a statement that a delegation of the Pakistani Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry shall

visit Lebanon tomorrow, in order to sign a cooperation agreement between both countries' chambers.

More details:

<http://en.addiyar.com/article/1369248-pakistani-economic-delegation-visits-lebs-lebanon-tomorrow-to-clinch-cooperation>

- **Blom Bank general manager expects wave of consolidation in Lebanon's banking sector**

The general manager of Lebanon's Blom Bank said on Monday he thinks "there will be a new wave of consolidation" in the country's banking sector.

More details:

<http://www.nasdaq.com/article/blom-bank-general-manager-expects-wave-of-consolidation-in-lebanons-banking-sector-20170515-00113#ixzz4h8G5b4Yc>

6. ARABIAN PENINSULA AND THE GULF OF BASRA

- **Yemeni Sharpshooters Kill 2 More Saudi Soldiers in Jizan**

Yemeni snipers have killed two Saudi troopers in the kingdom's Southern region of Jizan in another retaliatory attack against Riyadh's full-scale war on the impoverished nation.

More Details:

<http://en.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13960225000364>

- **Saudi Arabia, Russia agree oil output cuts until March 2018**

Saudi Arabia and Russia, the world's two top oil producers, agreed on Monday to extend oil output cuts for a further nine months until March 2018 to rein in a global crude glut, pushing up prices.

More Details:

<http://www.nasdaq.com/article/saudi-arabia-russia-agree-oil-output-cuts-until-march-2018-20170515-00034>

- **Qatar emir urges political solution to refugee problem**

Millions of refugees have fled their countries and homes to escape oppression, persecution and natural disasters in search of a better life, Qatari Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani said at the opening of the 17th Doha Forum.

More Details:

<http://www.arabnews.com/node/1099806/middle-east>

- **Abu Dhabi doctors operate on 110 people in six days during Yemen visit**

A team of doctors from hospitals in Abu Dhabi operated on 110 patients in six days during a visit to a remote part of south Yemen.

More Details:

<http://www.thenational.ae/uae/health/abu-dhabi-doctors-operate-on-110-people-in-six-days-during-yemen-visit>

- **Deloitte prepares companies in Saudi Arabia and Bahrain for implications of VAT implementation**

The Saudi Tax Authority has published Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) on its website announcing it will introduce VAT as of 1 January 2018. The Bahrain Ministry of Finance earlier this year confirmed that Bahrain has also signed the GCC VAT Treaty.

More Details:

<http://www.cpifinancial.net/news/post/41083/deloitte-prepares-companies-in-saudi-arabia-and-bahrain-for-implications-of-vat-implementation>

- **Omani Minister Responsible for Defence Affairs, British Chief of Defence Staff discuss cooperation**

Badr bin Saud bin Harib Al Busaidi, Oman's Minister Responsible for Defence Affairs, met yesterday with British Chief of the Defence Staff, Air Chief Marshal Sir Stuart Peach, to discuss cooperation between the two countries.

More Details:

<http://wam.ae/en/details/1395302613668>

- **Saudi Arabia is trying to reshape its role in the Arab World**

Saudi Arabia is a nation at a turning point. From wealth based on natural resources, to wealth based on economic production. From investing in the education of its youth, to reaping the rewards of that investment, as young graduates return to build their country stronger and more resilient than it was before.

More Details:

<http://www.arabianbusiness.com/saudi-arabia-is-trying-reshape-its-role-in-arab-world-673747.html>

- **Yemeni Clerics Calls on Muslim Nations to Renounce Saudi Regime**

Yemen's Scholars Association condemned the Saudi regime for oppressing and killing Shiite Muslims in al-Awamiyah in the kingdom's Eastern Province, calling on Muslims around the world to "renounce" the regime.

More Details:

<https://www.tasnimnews.com/en/news/2017/05/15/1408455/yemeni-clerics-calls-on-muslim-nations-to-renounce-saudi-regime>

- **Dubai FDI, Dubai Exports teams on 5-day mission to Canada**

A Dubai Government delegation led by Dubai Investment Development agency, an agency of Dubai Economy, will leave on a five-day mission to Canada, to present the strategic advantages of Dubai as an emerging knowledge economy and gateway to fast growing markets in and around the Middle East, North Africa, CIS and the Indian Subcontinent.

More Details:

<http://gulftoday.ae/portal/3588142e-99c7-4d89-873d-e834353e2988.aspx>

- **UN adopts Bahrain's resolution on Palestine**

Bahrain's efforts to mobilise global support for the Palestinian cause yesterday made a big leap ahead with the United Nations Human Settlements Programme's (UN-HABITAT) unanimously adopting a draft resolution presented by the Kingdom on Sustainable Urban Development in Palestine.

More Details;

<http://www.newsofbahrain.com/viewNews.php?ppId=33338&TYPE=Posts&pid=21&MNU=2&SUB=1>

7. EGYPT

- **Saudi Acwa Power, Egypt's Electricity Ministry to establish power plant in Luxor**

Egypt's Ministry of Electricity has agreed with the Saudi company Acwa Power to launch a power plant with a capacity of 2,250 MW in Luxor governorate.

More Details:

<http://en.amwalalghad.com/investment-news/industry-trade/56841-egypts-electricity-ministry-agrees-with-acwa-power-for-new-power-plant-in-luxor.html>

- **Egyptian Colonel Killed in Bomb Attack on Armoured Vehicle in Sinai**

A colonel in the Egyptian military was killed and three recruits injured when their armoured vehicle was hit by an explosion in the Sinai Peninsula, security sources said.

More Details:

<http://en.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13960225000402>

- **Jordan, PA, Egypt reiterate commitment to two states**

Jordan, the Palestinian Authority (PA) and Egypt on Sunday reiterated their commitment to the “two-state solution” as the only solution to the Israel-PA conflict, the Jordanian news agency Petra reports.

More Details:

<http://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx/229640>

- **Egyptian Tourist Authority looks for more visitors from India**

A string of incidents in the past six years have dealt a serious blow to Egypt’s tourism sector, but there has been an upswing in the number of visitors owing to the improved security situation and various steps taken by the government, a visiting tourism official has said.

More Details:

<http://gulftoday.ae/portal/15abc86f-6065-45bc-b58a-f336015310fe.aspx>

- **President el-Sisi praises UAE's development support to Egypt**

President of Egypt Abdel Fattah el-Sisi praised UAE's generous contribution to the development projects in Egypt, especially the wheat silos programme.

More Details:

<http://wam.ae/en/details/1395302613844>

- **Egypt says IMF praises reform program after delegation visit**

The International Monetary Fund's mission concluded its visit to Cairo on Sunday during which the Fund conducted the first review of Egypt's economic reform program.

More Details:

<http://www.egyptindependent.com//news/egypt-says-imf-praises-reform-program-after-delegation-visit>

- **Media: Egypt does not allow Russian aviation security into its airports**

Flights between Russia and Egypt were postponed indefinitely after the Egyptian government refused to allow Russian aviation security personnel into its airports, Interfax news agency reported, citing a source familiar with the situation.

More Details:

<http://uawire.org/news/media-egypt-does-not-allow-russian-aviation-security-into-its-airports>

- **Egyptian state is 'in a race' to provide essential goods at affordable prices: Sisi**

Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah El-Sisi said on Sunday that the state is "in a race against time" to provide citizens with essential consumer goods at affordable prices, citing difficulties due to increasing rates of consumption.

More Details:

<http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/64/268749/-.aspx>

- **Attacks kill 3 troops in Egypt's Sinai**

Three military officers were killed in two separate attacks in Egypt's restive Sinai Peninsula on Sunday, according to a local security source.

More Details:

<http://aa.com.tr/en/africa/attacks-kill-3-troops-in-egypt-s-sinai/818145>

- **Egypt Discovers New Necropolis with 17 Mummies in Minya**

An Egyptian archaeological mission has found a necropolis holding at least 17 mummies near the Nile Valley city of Minya, in the first such find in the area, the antiquities ministry said on Saturday.

More Details;

<http://www.popularmechanics.com/science/archaeology/a26503/egypt-necropolis-minya/>

8. NORTH AFRICA

- **Algerian Prime Minister Meets with Chairperson of African Union Commission**

Algerian Prime Minister, Abdelmalek Sellal has met with the chairperson of the African Union Commission, Moussa Faki. During the meeting, they discussed issues of common interest, including peace, security and social and economic development in Africa.

More Details

<http://wam.ae/en/details/1395302613863>

- **Algeria stresses counterterrorism requires joint action**

Algerian Prime Minister, Abdelmalek Sellal on Sunday stressed the fight against terrorism and various forms of criminality require joint action between international security services and strong commitment of the international community.

More Details

http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/world/2017-05/15/content_29349014.htm

- **North Africa's oldest synagogue to become a world heritage site?**

Tunisia plans to seek UNESCO World Heritage status for the island of Djerba, site of Africa's oldest synagogue and an annual Jewish pilgrimage, its culture minister said on Sunday.

More Details

<http://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx/229626>

- **Thousands protest Tunisia corruption amnesty bill**

Thousands of Tunisians on Saturday protested [advocacy press release] a bill that would grant amnesty to officials facing corruption charges from a previous regime.

More Details

<http://www.jurist.org/paperchase/2017/05/thousands-protest-tunisia-corruption-amnesty-bill.php>

- **Italy, Germany call for EU mission on Libya-Niger border**

The German and Italian interior ministers have called for an EU mission to be installed on the border between Libya and Niger to stem migrant crossings to Europe.

More Details

<http://www.euractiv.com/section/africa/news/italy-germany-call-for-eu-mission-on-libya-niger-border/>

- **The Libyan quagmire**

Let us not mince words. The situation in Libya is surrealistically complex and extremely fraught with danger. The aspirations of the Libyan people to democracy and the establishment of a modern, civil state seem far from realisation in the foreseeable future. The country is deeply divided, torn by conflicts and rampant lawlessness.

More Details

<http://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20170515/opinion/The-Libyan-quagmire.648029>

- **Dutch ambassador in talks with Hafter**

The Dutch ambassador, Eric Strating, held talks today at the Rajmah military base near Benghazi's Benina Airport with the head of the Libyan National Army, Field Marshal Khalifa Hafter

More Details

<https://www.libyaherald.com/2017/05/14/dutch-ambassador-in-talks-with-hafter/>

- **More Inclusive Growth and Youth Employment Within Reach for Morocco**

Rabat, May 15, 2017 – Morocco has an opportunity in the years ahead to boost economic growth and job creation, especially for young people, and to catch up even faster with developed economies by investing in its human capital, modernizing the economy and improving the performance of public institutions. This is the conclusion of the most recent Morocco Economic Memorandum (CEM) released today, entitled “Morocco 2040 - Emerging by Investing in Intangible Capital”.

More Details

<http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2017/05/15/more-inclusive-growth-and-youth-employment-within-reach-for-morocco>

- **Sanlam forks out \$329million**

Johannesburg - Sanlam and Santam on Thursday increased their effective stake in Morocco-based SAHAM Finances by a further 16.6 percent, to 46.6 percent, for U.S.\$329 million plus transaction costs after meeting all necessary regulatory approvals.

More Details

<http://www.iol.co.za/business-report/companies/sanlam-forks-out-329million-9138007>

- **Sisi calls for lifting arms embargo on Libya**

Egyptian President Abdel Fattah Al Sisi reiterated a call on the international community to lift an arms embargo on Libya on Saturday, which would allow weapons to be delivered legally to a powerful general he backs in the fractured country's east.

More Details

<http://gulftoday.ae/portal/84535332-019e-49c6-be71-a240eab8e8bb.aspx>

9. AFGHANISTAN – PAKISTAN

- **Some Taliban circles ready to reconcile: HIA**

HIA spokesman Qarib Rahman Saeed told Pajhwok Afghan News the Taliban's circles who had contacted the HIA were inside and outside of the country.

More Details

<http://www.pajhwok.com/en/2017/05/14/some-taliban-circles-ready-reconcile-hia>

- **Will US troops surge help lasting peace, stability in Afghanistan?**

Afghan national defense and security forces took security responsibility soon after US withdrew its forces from Afghanistan. In 2014, Afghan national security forces showed capability for security and did not let armed opponents capture big cities.

More Details

<http://thekabultimes.gov.af/index.php/opinions/politics/13967-will-us-troops-surge-help-lasting-peace-stability-in-afghanistan.html>

- **Afghan official: roadside bomb kills 4 in eastern province**

An Afghan official says at least four people were killed when a police vehicle hit a roadside bomb in eastern Paktia province. Abdullah Hsrat, spokesman for the provincial governor, says two border police officers and two civilians were killed in the attack, which took place in Zazi Aryub district on Sunday night.

More Details

http://hosted.ap.org/dynamic/stories/A/AS_AFGHANISTAN?SITE=AP&SECTION=HOME&TEMPLATE=DEFAULT&CTIME=2017-05-15-01-48-50

- **Trump Expanding War from Syria to Afghanistan As Media Focuses on Comey**

VJ Prashad and Paul Jay: while the media continues its frenzy over Comey's firing and the "Russia connection", Trump is readying his "global war against Islamic Fascism" to be fought "without restraint"

More Details

http://therealnews.com/t2/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=31&Itemid=74&jumival=19092

- **New policy will apply both to Afghanistan and Pakistan: McMaster**

This marks the first time a senior US official has said that the new policy would also cover Pakistan as previous statements defined it only as the Afghan policy. "And so what we'll have at the end of the next few weeks here is an opportunity for a much more effective strategy for the problem set in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and the region broadly," Gen McMaster told a White House news briefing this weekend.

More Details

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1333236/new-policy-will-apply-both-to-afghanistan-and-pakistan-mcmaster>

- **Ghani confers high state medal on NATO special operations commander**

President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani conferred the high state Mir Masjedi Khan medal on NATO special operations commander in Afghanistan.

More Details

<http://www.khaama.com/ghani-confers-high-state-medal-on-nato-special-operations-commander-02756>

- **No casualties reported in Kabul explosion: Danish**

An explosion took place in west of Kabul city on Sunday night causing panic among the local residents but the security officials are saying that no one was hurt in the incident.

More Details

<http://www.khaama.com/no-casualties-reported-in-kabul-explosion-danish-02755>

- **Will not let Pakistan war against neighbours: Zardari**

Islamabad: Former President Asif Ali Zardari on Sunday said he stood for good relations with Pakistan's neighbouring countries and criticised the Nawaz Sharif led government for creating discord along the lines of what he perceives to be "American foreign policy".

More Details

<http://thepeninsulaqatar.com/article/15/05/2017/Will-not-let-Pakistan-war-against-neighbours-Zardari>

- **Pakistan a hub in China's 'New Silk Road'**

Pakistan is a key player in China's Belt and Road Initiative that has become known as the the "New Silk Road". China is investing billions of dollars to transform the country's infrastructure.

More Details

<http://www.aljazeera.com/video/news/2017/05/pakistan-hub-chinas-new-silk-road-170515065221413.html>

- **Pakistan trying to woo UN, US, by declaring Hafiz Saeed a terrorist: Ujjwal Nikam**

Mumbai (Maharashtra) [India], May 15 (ANI): With the Pakistan government admitting that Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) chief Hafiz Saeed is involved in terrorist activities, noted Public Prosecutor Ujjwal Nikam on Monday frowned over the development saying it could be a part of Islamabad's conspiracy to get into the good books of United States and the United Nations.

More Details

<http://www.aninews.in/newsdetail-Mg/MzE0Mjgy/pakistan-trying-to-woo-un-us-by-declaring-hafiz-saeed-a-terrorist-ujjwal-nikam.html>

10.TURKEY AND THE MIDDLE EAST

- **Mutual trust to solve Mideast problems: Turkish envoy**

Turkish ambassador to Iran Riza Hakan Tekin said Monday mutual trust is the key to solving problems in the Middle East. "Trust is what we need the most in the region," Tekin told a conference titled "Turkey's Middle East policies" at Tehran's Shahid Beheshti University. "It seems difficult to solve problems [in the region] without settling [trust] issue," he said. The diplomat said regional problems should be solved by countries in the region.

More Details:

<http://www.worldbulletin.net/turkey/189521/mutual-trust-to-solve-mideast-problems-turkish-envoy>

- **Turkish lawmaker decries 'killer solution for Syria'**

In a new online piece, a leading Turkish parliamentarian and academic explores the controversial U.S. decision to provide heavy arms to the terrorist PKK/PYD to fight Daesh in Syria. Turkey considers the PYD to be the Syrian offshoot of the PKK, a terrorist organization banned by the U.S., Turkey, and the EU. But Washington has said the groups act as its partner in the fight against Daesh in northern Syria.

More Details:

<http://aa.com.tr/en/middle-east/turkish-lawmaker-decries-killer-solution-for-syria/817296>

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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