



# 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**

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**Non State Actors**

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**Relations with the West**

Batı'yla İlişkiler

**MIDDLE EAST DAILY BULLETIN**

**19 JANUARY 2016**

**NO: 2086**

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## 1. IRAQ,

- **Washington Warns Its Citizens from Traveling To Iraq**

United States warned its citizens from traveling to Iraq. According to a Foreign Ministry statement "the American citizens should avoid to go to Iraq." The US embassy in Baghdad confirmed that Americans kidnapped in the capital Baghdad and the US Embassy is working in coordination with the Iraqi government for their release.

More Details:

[http://www.ninanews.com/News\\_Details.aspx?16AzSsfTY3ZFm%252bzF9P3LtQ%253d%253d](http://www.ninanews.com/News_Details.aspx?16AzSsfTY3ZFm%252bzF9P3LtQ%253d%253d)

- **Sunday Times: 100 British ISIS elements killed in Iraq and Syria**

British newspaper The Sunday Times stated, that 100 British jihadists were killed in Syria and Iraq fighting with the ISIS organization, while about 50 high-risk fighters were back on UK streets The Sunday Times said in a report published yesterday, "As many as 100 British jihadists have been killed in Syria and Iraq fighting with ISIS or other terrorist groups," adding that, "The same number of British children, including newborns, are also now living under the rule of Isis, according to intelligence sources."

More Details:

<http://www.iraqinews.com/baghdad-politics/sunday-times-100-british-isis-elements-killed-iraq-syria/>

- **Hakim Meets Basra Governor and Head Of Its Council**

Head of the Islamic Supreme Council of Iraq Ammar al-Hakim discussed with the governor of Basra Majed Nasraoui and head of the provincial council, Sabah al-Bazzuni service, security and financial situation of the province. Hakim, during the meeting, which took place at his office in Baghdad, according to a statement of the Supreme Council, confirmed "the importance of the service in Basra in accordance with the available possibilities, indicating that the step of holding session of the Federal Government in Basra is an important step but it is not enough.

More Details:

[http://www.ninanews.com/News\\_Details.aspx?m7GI6jvQ8uIJ84eh3mZDpg%253d%253d](http://www.ninanews.com/News_Details.aspx?m7GI6jvQ8uIJ84eh3mZDpg%253d%253d)

- **9 ISIS elements killed in clashes between organization's elements west of Ramadi**

A security source in Anbar Province announced that nine ISIS elements including two military officials were killed in an armed clash broke out between the elements of the ISIS organization west of

Ramadi. The source said in a statement followed by Iraqinews.com, “Armed clashes broke out between the ISIS elements and the military officials in the ISIS organization in Dolab area in Heet City (70 km west of Ramadi),” noting that, “The clashes broke out due to the escape of some ISIS elements and their inability to fight the security forces and tribal fighters.”

More Details:

<http://www.iraqinews.com/iraq-war/9-isis-elements-killed-in-clash-with-each-other-west-of-ramadi/>

- **US Embassy: 3 Americans Kidnapped In Baghdad, We work With the Iraqi Government for Their Release**

The US embassy in Baghdad confirmed that Americans kidnapped in the capital Baghdad and the US Embassy is working in coordination with the Iraqi government for their release. US embassy spokesman Scott Paul told the NINA That the US citizens (did not say how many) had been kidnapped from a Baghdad neighborhood by unidentified gunmen and the US Embassy in constant contact with the Iraqi official authorities for their release.

More Details:

[http://www.ninanews.com/News\\_Details.aspx?6wPvu5Vxz2B9IKlrbT41bw%253d%253d](http://www.ninanews.com/News_Details.aspx?6wPvu5Vxz2B9IKlrbT41bw%253d%253d)

- **Oil declined below \$28 after lifting sanctions on Iran**

Economic analysts announced, that the world oil prices declined to less than \$28 a barrel to record the lowest level in 13 years due to the market readiness to receive nearly 500,000 barrels of Iranian oil again after the lifting of sanctions imposed on Iran. Brent crude fell to \$27.67 a barrel in the early hours of the morning, to record its lowest level since 2003, before rising again to \$28.25.

More Details:

<http://www.iraqinews.com/business-iraqi-dinar/oil-falls-below-28-after-less-than-24-hours-to-lift-the-sanctions-on-iran/>

- **ISIS leader al-Baghdadi threatens to execute deserters from battles in Hawija, Sharqat**

A local source in Nineveh province said on Monday, that the ISIS militants executed 35 of its elements for fleeing from battles, while ISIS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi issued an order to punish all deserters from the battles by execution. The source reported for IraqiNews.com, “ISIS militants executed 35 ISIS elements on the back of their desertion from the battle fronts and passiveness in the tasks assigned to them,” noting that, “The execution took place in Ghazlani camp by firing squad.”

More Details:

<http://www.iraqinews.com/iraq-war/source-isis-leader-al-baghdadi-threatens-execute-deserters-battles-hawija-sharqat/>

- **Scores of Kurdish Migrants Return Home after Disappointment in Europe**

After spending weeks in Germany, many Kurdish migrants from Iraq feel disappointed and have signed up for voluntary repatriation, Rudaw media outlet reported on Sunday. A greater number of migrants from Iraqi Kurdistan entered into Europe along with the influx of Syrian refugees last year. Migrants had to follow strict policies to obtain a permit of stay in the EU, and the procedure can take up to several months. Voluntary return is more common among migrants from Iraqi Kurdistan, than from other regions of Iraq, according to German authorities, Rudaw reported. An unofficial figure estimates the number of returnees at over 50 a day. In January alone, there have reportedly been at least 86 returns using direct Berlin-Erbil flights.

More Details:

<http://english.shafaag.com/politics/17299-scores-of-kurdish-migrants-return-home-after-disappointment-in-europe.html>

- **Sajjan: Canada to withdraw from international coalition's operations**

The Canadian Defense Minister Harjit Sajjan said, that the international coalition should stop its air strikes against ISIS and start to rely on ground operations to eliminate the presence of the ISIS organization. Sajjan said in a statement followed by IraqiNews.com, "A ground campaign – not airstrikes – should be regarded as the priority right now," asserting that, "It has to be the Iraqi boots on the ground ... if you don't have the boots on the ground, you cannot win."

More Details:

<http://www.iraqinews.com/baghdad-politics/canada-to-withdraw-from-coalitions-operations/>

- **President Masum, Iranian ambassador discuss strengthening ties**

Iraqi President Fuad Masum received Iran's ambassador to Iraq, Hassan Danayi Fer, at Al-Salam Palace in Baghdad on Monday, January 18, 2016. The meeting revolved around the mutual relations between Iraq and Iran and President Masum showed his joy regarding the lifting of bans on Iran. He wished that the new nuclear deal would become a factor of stability, promoting mutual relations and regional cooperation.

More Details:

[http://www.pukmedia.com/EN/EN\\_Direje.aspx?Jimare=37533](http://www.pukmedia.com/EN/EN_Direje.aspx?Jimare=37533)

- **Unidentified militants kidnap police officer south of Kirkuk**

A source in Kirkuk Police Directorate said on Monday, that an officer with the police has been kidnapped from his house south of the province. The source reported for IraqiNews.com, "This afternoon, unidentified militants kidnapped an officer with Kirkuk Police from his house in the area of Wahid Azar south of Kirku, while took him at gunpoint to an unknown location."

More Details:

<http://www.iraqinews.com/iraq-war/unidentified-militants-kidnap-police-officer-south-kirkuk/>

- **Missing Americans in Iraq reportedly kidnapped from 'brothel' apartment**

A group of Americans who disappeared in Baghdad over the weekend were kidnapped from their interpreter's apartment, according to multiple Iraqi sources. The apartment is well-known in southern Baghdad as a brothel and is subject to frequent raids by Shiite militias, including the Iran-backed Asaib ah al-Haqq, a police official and a building resident told The Washington Post.

More Details:

[http://www.pukmedia.com/EN/EN\\_Direje.aspx?Jimare=37532](http://www.pukmedia.com/EN/EN_Direje.aspx?Jimare=37532)

- **Abadi: lifting economic embargo on Tehran endorses region's security and stability**

The Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi said, that lifting the economic embargo on Iran contributes to the endorsement of the region's security, stability and prosperity. Abadi congratulated the Islamic Republic of Iran and its people on lifting the economic embargo and the beginning of the nuclear agreement' implementation with the major countries."

More Details:

<http://www.iraqinews.com/features/abadi-lifting-of-economic-embargo-on-tehran-promotes-regions-security-and-stability/>

- **Iraq to sack 30 ambassadors on dual citizenships**

The Iraqi Ministry of Foreign Relations has started an initiative to dismiss 30 Iraqi ambassadors for possessing dual citizenships. According to a news report published on Monday, January 18, 2016, the Iraqi Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ibrahim Al-Jaffari, has prepared a list identifying the name of 30 Iraqi ambassadors who have dual citizenships. The list of names is set to be reviewed by the Iraqi Council of Ministers to make a final decision about the ambassadors.

More Details:

[http://www.pukmedia.com/EN/EN\\_Direje.aspx?Jimare=37526](http://www.pukmedia.com/EN/EN_Direje.aspx?Jimare=37526)



- **US and Iraq search for Americans kidnapped in Baghdad**

US and Iraqi authorities were searching on Monday for three Americans who were kidnapped in Baghdad, the latest group of foreign nationals abducted in recent months. The three US nationals were kidnapped from a "suspicious apartment", a security official said, using language implying the location was a brothel.

More Details:

<http://nna-leb.gov.lb/en/show-news/55367/US-and-Iraq-search-for-Americans-kidnapped-in-Baghdad>

- **Iraq, Syria 'must own victory against IS'**

An enduring victory over Islamic State militants must be won and owned by the people of Iraq and Syria, Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull has declared on day one of his official visit to the US. Mr Turnbull delivered a keynote address focused on global security and trade to a capacity audience at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington DC on Monday afternoon (US time). The prime minister provided some insights from his unannounced weekend trip to Afghanistan and Iraq, and morning discussions with US Defense Secretary Ash Carter.

More Details:

<http://www.sbs.com.au/news/article/2016/01/19/iraq-syria-must-own-victory-against>

- **Chinese ambassador in Iraq and Minister of Oil meet to discuss future**

The Chinese ambassador in Iraq, Mr. Wang Yong met with Iraq's minister of oil, Mr. Adil Abd Al-Mahdi on Thursday the 14th of January 2016. Mr. Al Mahdi and Mr. Yong discussed how to sustain and develop the positive relationship between the two countries. Mr. Abd Al Mahdi established the fact exist a history between Iraq and China and therefore, reiterated the importance of expanding associated work and providing all of the tools to develop cooperation in the energy sector in order to generate more successful business for both countries.

More Details:

<http://www.rebuildingiraq.net/news/view/15227-Chinese-ambassador-in-Iraq-and-Minister-of-Oil-meet-to-discuss-future>

- **Kidnapping of Americans in Iraq raises fears about security**

The abduction of three Americans from a Baghdad apartment over the weekend is the latest in a series of brazen high-profile kidnappings undermining confidence in the Iraqi government's ability to control state-sanctioned Shiite militias that have grown in strength as Iraqi security forces battle the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS).

More Details:

<http://www.cbsnews.com/news/kidnapping-of-americans-in-iraq-raises-fears-about-security/>

- **Australia PM makes surprise visit to Iraq**

Speaking to several hundred Australia and Kiwi soldiers at Camp Taji, north of Baghdad, Mr Turnbull also flagged possible further Australian contributions in future but stressed that the military commitment would not last forever. The Australian Prime Minister also invited Ghani to visit his country and the invitation was swiftly accepted by the Afghan president. He said the current worldwide program to train the Iraqi army was committed to training up 10 army brigades and it would then come to an end.

More Details:

<http://www.weupit.com/australia-pm-makes-surprise-visit-to-iraq/11485/>

- **Sunni Parliament Boycott over Sectarian Violence; 129 Killed in Iraq**

New but unconfirmed details are arising out of the kidnapping mystery of three U.S. contractors in Baghdad. The Americans are of Iraqi origin. They reportedly work at Baghdad International Airport. Three names were released, and it was reported that one contractor is female. The trio may have been attending a party at their translator's apartment or at an apartment described as a brothel. Militias are said to raid that home in the Doura neighborhood on occasion. The search for the contractors continues, as confidence in Iraqi security is falling.

More Details:

<http://original.antiwar.com/updates/2016/01/18/sunni-parliament-boycott-over-sectarian-violence-129-killed-in-iraq/?>

## 2. SYRIA

- **Al-Halaqi meets Jordanian political delegation**

Prime Minister Wael al-Halaqi affirmed on Monday the important role of Arab syndicates and political forces that are committed to the Arab nation's issues in bolstering society against the Takfiri mentality and reviving the sense of nationalism and Arab solidarity. During a meeting with a Jordanian delegation that includes lawyers, political activists, and representatives of political parties and social activities, al-Halaqi stressed the need for Arab lawyers to help in prosecuting all those who contributed to the global terrorist war waged against Syria and participated in looting and destroying its resources, hailing the supportive stances of Jordanian syndicates and social associations towards Syria and its people.

More Details:

<http://sana.sy/en/?p=66910>

- **Lavrov expects talks between Syrian govt and opposition in Damascus**

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said on Monday he hoped that talks between the Syrian government and Syrian opposition would start this month in Damascus. Lavrov made his comments during a visit by Qatari Foreign Minister Khalid al-Attiyah to Moscow.

More Details:

<http://english.alarabiya.net/en/News/2016/01/18/Russia-s-Lavrov-expects-talks-between-Syrian-govt-and-opposition-in-Jan-in-Damascus.html>

- **Invites to Syria talks on hold, agreement on opposition needed: UN**

The United Nations said on Monday it would not issue invitations to peace talks between Syria's government and opposition set to begin on Jan. 25 until major powers pushing the peace process reach agreement on which rebel representatives should attend. "At this stage the U.N. will proceed with issuing invitations when the countries spearheading the ISSG (International Syria Support Group) process come to an understanding on who among the opposition should be invited," U.N. spokesman Farhan Haq said.

More Details:

<http://thepeninsulaqatar.com/news/middle-east/366796/invites-to-syria-talks-on-hold-agreement-on-opposition-needed-un>

- **U.N. seeks mass resettlement of Syrians**

The new chief of the U.N. refugee agency said Monday the world should find a fairer formula for sharing the burden of Syria's crisis, including taking in tens of thousands of refugees from overwhelmed regional host nations. Filippo Grandi, who assumed his post earlier this month, heads an agency grappling with mounting challenges as Syria's five-year-old civil war drags on. Humanitarian aid lags more and more behind growing global needs, including those caused by the Syrian conflict.

More Details:

<http://english.alarabiya.net/en/News/middle-east/2016/01/19/U-N-seeks-mass-resettlement-of-Syrians.html>

- **Syrian rebels stop regime progress near Latakia**

The Syrian armed opposition have said rebel brigades have prevented the progress of regime forces towards areas controlled by the rebels in Mount Turkmen, in the countryside of Latakia. Al-Arabiya Al-Hadath, a news channel, reported the Syrian opposition saying on Sunday that rebels had thwarted the progress of regime troops in Tel Toama front and the village of Daghdaghan, amid heavy air cover from the Russian air force to retake rebel areas.

More Details:

<https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/news/middle-east/23390-syrian-rebels-stop-regime-progress-near-latakia>

- **Lebanese civil defense volunteers back down from Syria trip**

Civil Defense volunteers Monday backed down on their decision to head to neighboring Syria after residents of eastern Lebanon urged them to stay in their country. Mayor of the border town of Majdal Anjar, Sami al-Ajami, also appealed to the volunteers not to cross the border. Reports said the volunteers headed back to Beirut, without elaborating.

More Details:

<http://www.albawaba.com/news/lebanese-civil-defense-volunteers-back-down-syria-trip-794866>

- **ISIS Mass Murderers Eliminated by Syrian Troops in Deir Ezzor**

The Syrian Army and Armed forces continued its mission in fighting terrorism in several provinces of the country, re-establishing control over areas, eliminating terrorists and destroying their hideouts and weaponry. In Deir Ezzor an army unit carried out intensive operation on gatherings of ISIL terrorists in al-Bghailiye village in Deir Ezzor western countryside, re-establishing control over al-Ruwad association houses, which constitute the highest point in the village, a field source told SANA on Monday.

More Details:

<http://en.alalam.ir/news/1780709>

- **Syrian refugee crisis builds at Jordan's borders**

Jordan's newest camps for Syrian refugees are being built not amongst the deserts and urban sprawl of northern Jordan, but on the far-flung badlands of the eastern desert, on the southern fringe of Syria itself. Here, in a demilitarised zone between the two countries, a rapidly growing outflow of Syrian refugees is hitting the limits of Jordanian hospitality. This week, Jordanian authorities and the NGOs that offer basic services estimate there are between 16,000 and 17,000 people marooned on the frontier.

More Details:

<http://www.middleeasteye.net/news/syrian-refugee-crisis-building-jordans-borders-1697861927>

- **New Aid Enters Besieged Syria Towns**

Aid convoys have made new deliveries of fuel, food and medicine to four besieged Syrian towns, humanitarian officials said on Tuesday. The United Nations, International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and Syria's Red Crescent (SARC) said in a joint statement that simultaneous deliveries reached the towns on Monday. They said fuel had entered Fuaa and Kafraya, which are under rebel siege, and Madaya, which is under a government siege.

More Details:

<http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/199751-new-aid-enters-besieged-syria-towns>

- **Five Starve, More at Risk in Madaya**

Five people have starved to death in the last week in the Syrian town of Madaya, where a single biscuit sells for \$15 and baby milk costs \$313 per kilo, despite two emergency United Nations aid deliveries to the besieged town, a UN report said. Local relief workers have reported 32 deaths of starvation in the past month, and last week two convoys of aid supplies were delivered to the 42,000 people living under a months-long blockade. Dozens more people need immediate specialised medical care outside Madaya if they are to survive, but aid workers from the U.N. and Syrian Arab Red Crescent have managed to evacuate only 10 people, the report said.

More Details:

<http://english.aawsat.com/2016/01/article55346680/five-starve-more-at-risk-in-madaya>

### 3. IRAN

- **Life After Sanctions: Tehran Offers Moscow Tips on Surviving Squeeze**

Commenting on the lifting of Western sanctions against Iran, and the possible implications for the Russian-Iranian partnership, Syrian journalist Abbas Juma suggests that however events may unfold, the two countries have a rich history of relations to build on. Moreover, Tehran may yet teach Moscow a thing or two on how to deal with the West.

More Details:

<http://en.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13941028001510>



- **Diplomat: West's Impacts on Russo-Iranian Relations to Weaken after Lifting of Sanctions**

The West's influence on Tehran-Moscow ties will weaken now that sanctions are lifted off Iran, Iranian Ambassador to Russia Mehdi Sanayee wrote on his LiveJournal blog on Monday.

More Details:

<http://en.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13941028001540>

- **Iran, Spain plan joint oil refinery at Gibraltar (19th Jan)**

Iran and Spain are discussing a plan to build a joint oil refinery, which will be finally owned by Iran, at the Gibraltar Strait, Press TV reported.

More Details:

<http://en.trend.az/iran/business/2482200.html>

- **New US bans have no intl. legal ground: Zarif**

Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif says Iran will "proportionally" respond to new US sanctions on Tehran's missile program.

More Details:

<http://www.presstv.ir/Detail/2016/01/19/446372/Iran-Zarif-US-sanctions-missile-program/>

- **Iran ready to meet Europe's gas need**

An NIGC official has announced Iran's willingness to launch gas talks with EU expressing the country's readiness to supply European countries with natural gas.

More Details:

<http://en.mehrnews.com/news/113708/iran-ready-to-meet-Europe-s-gas-need>

- **Envoy: Iran-Azerbaijan trade ties to boom as sanctions lifted (19th Jan)**

The removal of international sanctions against Iran can lead to strengthening trade ties between Tehran and Baku, an Iranian diplomat said.

More Details:

<http://en.trend.az/business/economy/2482230.html>

- **Pak Economists: Energy, first trade priority with Iran in post – sanctions era**

Pakistani economists believe that lifting of Iran sanctions has created a big opportunity for Pakistan as a neighbouring country to enhance bilateral trade ties among which the energy projects need to be the first priority.

More Details:

<http://www.irna.ir/en/News/81926755/>

- **Iran warns of reciprocation over JCPOA breach**

Iran's President Hassan Rouhani said the Islamic Republic will respond in kind if the P5+1 group fails to fulfill its commitments under a landmark nuclear agreement clinched in July 2015.

More Details:

<http://www.iran-daily.com/News/135231.html?catid=3&title=Iran-warns-of-reciprocation-over-JCPOA-breach>

- **Iran starts plan to boost oil by half a million barrels**

Iran started the plan for boosting oil production by 500,000 barrels per day (bpd) following removal of the West-led sanctions against the country, National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) Managing Director Rokneddin Javadi stated.

More Details:

[http://www.tehrantimes.com/index\\_View.asp?code=252313](http://www.tehrantimes.com/index_View.asp?code=252313)

- **Iran says to answer sanctions by advancing missile industry**

Iran will answer sanctions by advancing its missile program and a greater military power, Foreign Ministry spokesman Hassan Jabber Ansari said in response to the recent U.S. sanctions against Iran.

More Details:

[http://www.tehrantimes.com/index\\_View.asp?code=252305](http://www.tehrantimes.com/index_View.asp?code=252305)

- **Iranian government's tax incomes to rise 14%**

According to the budget bill for the next Iranian calendar year (March 2016-March 2017), tax incomes are projected to rise by 14 percent from the last year's 880 trillion rials (about \$24 billion) to one quadrillion rials (about \$27 billion), said Iran's Management and Planning Organization Director Mohammad Baqer Nobakht.

More Details:

[http://www.tehrantimes.com/index\\_View.asp?code=252319](http://www.tehrantimes.com/index_View.asp?code=252319)

#### 4. ISRAEL – PALESTINE

- **Shaked to US envoy: Recant claim Israel applies separate laws to Jews, Arabs**

Dan Shapiro, the American ambassador to Israel, would be wise to “correct himself” and recant comments in which he accused the government of applying a different set of laws to Jews and Palestinians in the West Bank, Justice Minister Ayelet Shaked told Army Radio on Tuesday.

More Details:

<http://www.jpost.com/Arab-Israeli-Conflict/Shaked-to-US-envoy-Recant-claim-Israel-applies-separate-laws-to-Jews-Arabs-442014>

- **Bennett: Israeli government lacks strategy, initiative against threats**

Education Minister Naftali Bennett criticized his own government on Tuesday for what he views as a lack of a defense strategy against Israel’s primary enemies - Palestinian lone wolf terrorists, Hamas, and Hezbollah.

More Details:

<http://www.jpost.com/Breaking-News/Bennett-Israeli-government-lacks-strategy-initiative-against-threats-442010>

- **Teen Palestinian arrested for killing Dafna Meir in Otniel**

Palestinian minor suspected of stabbing and killing mother-of-six Dafna Meir at her home in the West Bank settlement of Otniel on Sunday evening was caught overnight Monday, security forces said.

More Details:

<http://www.timesofisrael.com/security-forces-capture-palestinian-suspect-shin-bet-capture-palestinian-who-stabbed-west-bank-woman-in-her-home/>

- **EU softens statement, but lays line between Israel and settlements**

The European Union reiterated Monday that it would continue to differentiate between Israel proper and the settlements, yet stopped short of explicitly calling for a “distinction.”

More Details:

<http://www.timesofisrael.com/eu-softens-statement-but-lays-line-between-israel-and-settlements/>

- **Israeli military tanks infiltrate Gaza borders**

Israeli military vehicles Tuesday infiltrated Gaza borders, going into the eastern part of Khan Younis area to the south of the Gaza Strip.

More Details:

<http://english.wafa.ps/page.aspx?id=ugLX7Wa29937390615augLX7W>

- **Israeli Army Seals Entrance of Bethlehem Town with Earth Mounds**

Israeli forces Tuesday sealed off the main entrance of the town of Janata to the east of Bethlehem, with earth mounds.

More Details:

<http://english.wafa.ps/page.aspx?id=ugLX7Wa29940245874augLX7W>

- **Israeli Soldiers Kidnap Five Palestinians Near Jenin**

Dozens of Israeli military vehicles invaded, on Tuesday at dawn, Ya'bad town, southwest of the northern West Bank city of Jenin, searched many homes, confiscated mobile phones and a computer, and kidnapped five young men.

More Details:

<http://www.imemc.org/article/74639>

- **Israeli forces demolish structures in Ramallah-area villages**

Israeli forces on Sunday demolished several structures in two occupied West Bank villages in Ramallah district saying they had been built without the necessary permits, locals told Ma'an.

More Details:

<http://www.maannnews.com/Content.aspx?id=769858>

## 5. JORDAN and LEBANON

- **King calls for further Jordan-UNHCR cooperation**

His Majesty King Abdullah on Monday called for further cooperation between the Kingdom and UNHCR, to ensure that the international community exerts more efforts vis-à-vis the issue of Syrian

refugees, especially in light of the increasing burdens borne by the Kingdom as a result of hosting Syrian refugees.

More Details:

<http://www.jordantimes.com/news/local/king-calls-further-jordan-unhcr-cooperation>

- **FM meets with EU counterparts, discusses Mideast, ties**

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign and Expatriates Affairs, Nasser Judeh, on Monday met with the foreign ministers of a number of European Union countries and discussed with them ways to cement ties between Jordan and their countries and the EU.

More Details:

[http://www.petra.gov.jo/Public\\_News/Nws\\_NewsDetails.aspx?lang=2&site\\_id=1&NewsID=233502&CatID=13](http://www.petra.gov.jo/Public_News/Nws_NewsDetails.aspx?lang=2&site_id=1&NewsID=233502&CatID=13)

- **PM, UN official discuss conditions of refugees in Jordan**

Prime Minister Abdullah Ensour on Monday received United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi, and the accompanying delegation, in the presence of Interior Minister Salamah Hammad and Minister of Water and Irrigation and Acting Minister of Planning and International Cooperation Hazim Al Nasser.

More Details:

[http://www.petra.gov.jo/Public\\_News/Nws\\_NewsDetails.aspx?lang=2&site\\_id=1&NewsID=233386&CatID=13](http://www.petra.gov.jo/Public_News/Nws_NewsDetails.aspx?lang=2&site_id=1&NewsID=233386&CatID=13)

- **Jordan unveils its \$7.5B water management strategy**

Jordan's Cabinet on Sunday reviewed a new national water strategy that will cost the Kingdom JD5.3 billion over the next 10 years, Government Spokesperson Mohammad Momani said.

More Details:

<http://www.albawaba.com/business/jordan-unveils-its-75b-water-management-strategy-794364>

- **Sudanese refugees forcibly deported from Jordan fear arrest and torture**

Hundreds of refugees and asylum seekers are facing persecution in the Sudanese capital of Khartoum after being forcibly deported from Jordan.

More Details:



<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/jan/19/sudanese-refugees-forcibly-deported-from-jordan-fear-arrest-and-torture>

- **UNHCR ‘understands Jordan’s security concerns’ — new chief**

Ending the conflict in Syria is the solution needed to end the refugee crisis, historically the largest the international community has been dealing with, a senior UN official said on Monday.

More Details:

<http://www.jordantimes.com/news/local/unhcr-understands-jordan%E2%80%99s-security-concerns%E2%80%99-%E2%80%94-new-chief#sthash.a4Qu3l6t.dpuf>

- **LF’s Geagea backs Aoun for Lebanon presidency**

Lebanese Forces leader Samir Geagea has dropped a political bombshell in Lebanon by backing his long-time rival Free Patriotic Movement head MP Michel Aoun for the presidency, the latest twist in the country’s bitterly divided political arena.

More Details:

<https://now.mmedia.me/lb/en/NewsReports/566502-lfs-geagea-to-back-aoun-for-lebanon-presidency>

- **Students protest Samaha ruling as new tapes emerge**

March 14 student and youth organizations demonstrated Monday in Tripoli, protesting the Military Court of Cassation’s decision to release former minister Michel Samaha, convicted on terrorism charges, on bail.

More Details:

<http://www.pressreader.com/lebanon/the-daily-star-lebanon/20160119/281573764700736/TextView>

- **Politicians react to Geagea’s endorsement**

Politicians voiced a range of reactions Monday following Lebanese Forces head Samir Geagea’s endorsement of Michel Aoun, the head of the Change and Reform bloc, for the presidency.

More Details:

<http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Lebanon-News/2016/Jan-19/332705-politicians-react-to-geageas-endorsement.ashx>

- **Franjeh Meets al-Rahi, Says His Presidential Nomination still Stands**

Head of the Marada Movement held talks on Monday night with Maronite Patriarch Beshara al-Rahi in wake of Lebanese Forces chief Samir Geagea's nomination of Change and Reform bloc leader MP Michel Aoun as president.

More Details:

<http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/199740-franjeh-meets-al-rahi-says-his-presidential-nomination-still-stands>

## 6. ARABIAN PENINSULA AND THE GULF OF BASRA

- **Nawaz Sharif meets Saudi King as Pakistan hopes to ease regional tensions**

Pakistan's Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif held talks with Saudi King Salman on Monday as part of efforts to ease regional tensions between the Sunni kingdom and Shiite Iran. Sharif is to head on Tuesday to Riyadh's rival Iran where he is expected to meet President Hassan Rouhani.

More Details:

<http://www.middle-east-online.com/english/?id=74759>

- **Putin, Qatari Emir talk Syria, economic cooperation**

President Vladimir Putin and the Emir of Qatar on Monday discussed the Syrian crisis, as global powers seek to push the warring sides towards the negotiating table. "Russia plays a main role when it comes to stability in the world," Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani said at the start of the meeting at the Kremlin. "We very much want to develop relations with Russia and find a solution to a number of problems related to stability in some countries of our region," he added in translated remarks released by the Kremlin.

More Details:

<http://english.alarabiya.net/en/News/middle-east/2016/01/18/Putin-Qatari-emir-talk-Syria-economic-cooperation-.html>

- **Deadly coalition strikes hit police HQ in Yemen capital**

Saudi-led coalition jets have struck a police headquarters in the rebel-controlled Yemeni capital Sanaa, leaving many dead and wounded, rescuers said Monday. "At least 30 people have been killed and wounded," a source in the emergency services said, adding that "search operations are ongoing" to find victims buried under the rubble of the two-storey building that partially collapsed.

More Details:

<http://www.middle-east-online.com/english/?id=74750>

- **Saudi arrest over firebomb attempt after Shiite cleric execution**

Saudi Arabia said Monday it had arrested a suspect for attempting to firebomb a government building in the Sunni-ruled kingdom's east during unrest over a Shiite cleric's execution. The ministry of interior said the suspect had been arrested for "attempting to set fire to a government building in Qatif using Molotov cocktails" on January 9.

More Details:

<http://thepeninsulaqatar.com/news/middle-east/366752/saudi-arrest-over-firebomb-attempt-after-shiite-cleric-execution>

- **Houthis reportedly fire Russian ballistic missile at Saudi forces**

Houthi rebels, backed by fighters from the allied popular committees, have reportedly carried out a missile attack against a hideout of Saudi foreign mercenaries in Yemen's central province of Ma'rib. A military source, requesting anonymity, said Houthi forces launched an OTR-21 Tochka tactical ballistic missile at the al-Bairaq base late on Sunday, killing an unspecified number of Saudi and Emirati soldiers as well as members of Academi, the American security services training company, formerly known as Blackwater, Arabic-language al-Masirah satellite television network reported.

More Details:

<http://www.albawaba.com/news/houthis-reportedly-fire-russian-ballistic-missile-saudi-forces-794452>

- **Saudi Tries to Gain its Goals by Creating Iranophobia in Middle East: Zarif**

Saudi Arabia tries to achieve its regional goals by promoting "Iranophobia" and creating tensions in the region, Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif says. Zarif made the remarks during an interview broadcast on Iranian TV on Monday, adding that the Saudis' actions result from their fear over the implementation of Iran's nuclear agreement with world powers.

More Details:

<http://en.alalam.ir/news/1780676>

- **4 Libyan detainees in UAE charged with pro-Brotherhood links**

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) has charged four Libyan detainees with supporting pro-Muslim Brotherhood Libyan organisations, a rights group said in a statement on Monday. All four of the

Libyan nationals denied the charges brought against them during their trials on Monday, the International Campaign for Freedom in the UAE said. The cases were adjourned until 15 February 2015, the statement added.

More Details:

<http://www.middleeasteye.net/news/4-libyan-detainees-uae-charged-pro-brotherhood-links-553492735>

- **Gunmen Kill Judge in Yemen's Aden**

Gunmen on Monday shot dead a judge in Aden, in the latest attack in the violence-plagued city of southern Yemen serving as the government's temporary base, police said. The unidentified assailants on a motorbike opened fire at Abdulhadi Mohammed near his house in the Mansura district, killing the judge, a police official said, adding they managed to flee.

More Details:

<http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/199729-gunmen-kill-judge-in-yemen-s-aden>

- **Former Yemeni Ambassador: Iranian Police is Responsible for Break in Attempts on Embassies**

Abdullah al-Siri, Former Yemeni Ambassador to Tehran, said that Iranian police department has partaken in opening up the embassy center of Yemen, after it had been evacuated due to Yemen cutting diplomatic ties with Iran last October. Moreover, it has supported the insurgents in Yemen by finding them a foothold center in Iran; the embassy has been transformed into a meeting center for their gatherings.

More Details:

<http://english.aawsat.com/2016/01/article55346673/former-yemeni-ambassador-iranian-police-is-responsible-for-break-in-attempts-on-embassies>

- **Kuwaiti former colonel abducted in Lebanon**

A Kuwaiti citizen has been abducted in the Bekaa Valley, Kuwait's ambassador to Lebanon has said. Abdul Aal Al Guinaee told Kuwait News Agency (Kuna) that the Kuwaiti diplomatic mission was in contact with Lebanese security agencies over the kidnapping of the Kuwaiti national and working on freeing him as soon as possible.

More Details:

<http://gulfnews.com/news/gulf/kuwait/kuwaiti-former-colonel-abducted-in-lebanon-1.1655357>

- **Oman signs \$1b loan pact with international banks to plug in budget deficit**

Oman's government on Monday signed a \$1 billion loan agreement with 11 international banks, including two regional banks, to partly fund an OMR3.3 billion deficit in the state budget. This is part of a major plan of the Ministry of Finance to meet the state budget's deficit through a medium-term financial plan.

More Details:

[http://timesofoman.com/article/75728/Oman/Government/Oman-has-signed-an-agreement-with-11-international-banks-including-two-regional-banks-for-\\$1-billion](http://timesofoman.com/article/75728/Oman/Government/Oman-has-signed-an-agreement-with-11-international-banks-including-two-regional-banks-for-$1-billion)

## 7. EGYPT

- **Russian aviation officials check security measures at Cairo airport**

A delegation from the Russian Aviation Authority (RAA) arrived in Cairo Monday to check security measures at Cairo International Airport, head of EgyptAir security sector Tarek Zaky was quoted by Al Ahram.

More Details:

<http://thecairopost.youm7.com/news/189497/news/russian-aviation-officials-check-security-measures-at-cairo-airport>

- **Moody's praises Egypt's new measures to limit consumer loans**

The international credit agency Moody's said on Monday that the Central Bank of Egypt's (CBE) recent measures – which aim to limit retail and consumer loans and reduce the concentration of loans to corporations – are credit positive for banks.

More Details:

<http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/3/12/181348/Business/Economy/Moodys-praises-Egypt-s-new-measures-to-limit-consum.aspx>

- **Parliamentary Speaker urges ratification of decrees to avoid 'system collapse'**

Parliamentary Speaker Ali Abdel Aal urged MPs to expedite the ratification of decrees that were issued during the legislature's three year absence and are under review in the parliament.

More Details:

<http://www.dailynewsegypt.com/2016/01/18/parliamentary-speaker-urges-ratification-of-decrees-to-avoid-system-collapse/>



- **China will adopt fair and unbiased stance regarding Middle East conflicts: Vice Foreign Minister**

China will continue to adopt a balanced approach to its engagement with the Middle East, according to Chinese Vice Foreign Minister Zhang Ming Monday.

More Details:

<http://www.dailynewsegypt.com/2016/01/18/china-will-adopt-fair-and-unbiased-stance-regarding-middle-east-conflicts-vice-foreign-minister/>

- **Egypt's parliament endorses controversial anti-terrorism law**

Egypt's Parliament on Sunday overwhelmingly endorsed a controversial anti-terrorism law that sets up special courts and shields its enforcers from legal ramifications.

More Details:

<http://www.egyptindependent.com//news/egypt-s-parliament-endorses-controversial-anti-terrorism-law>

- **#I\_participated\_in\_January\_revolution dominates social media**

A few days prior to the fifth anniversary of the January 25 revolution, the hashtag #I\_participated\_in\_January\_Revolution in Arabic went viral on social media after Taher Mokhtar, a Doctors' Syndicate freedom committee member charged with calling for January 25 protests and possessing anti-regime publications, was detained.

More Details:

<http://www.egyptindependent.com//news/iparticipatedinjanuaryrevolution-dominates-social-media>

- **Stock market recovers, increases by 3.1 pct after Egyptian and Arab purchases**

Egypt's main stock index EGX30 recovered from a series of declines and rose by 3.1%, after increasing Egyptian and Arab purchases on Monday.

More Details:

<http://en.aswatmasriya.com/news/view.aspx?id=ace69698-06ff-443f-a0f3-ea0e35767f0c>

- **Trade, investments high on Xi agenda in Egypt**

Trade representatives from China and Egypt are expected to sign a number of multi-billion dollar deals and investment agreements during President Xi Jinping's visit to the capital Cairo tomorrow.

More Details:

<http://thebricspost.com/trade-investments-high-on-xi-agenda-in-egypt/#.Vp4BdZqLRkg>

- **Egyptian ambassador meets Foreign Ministry chief**

Foreign Ministry Director General Dr. Dore Gold meets Egypt's new ambassador to Israel, as relations between the countries improve.

More Details:

<http://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx/206672#.Vp4Bf5qLRkg>

- **Egypt parliament forms committee to investigate corruption claims by top auditor**

Egypt's newly elected parliament formed a committee at the end of Sunday's session to investigate the allegations by Egypt's top auditor Hisham Geneina that state corruption led to the loss of LE600 billion from 2012 to 2015.

More Details:

<http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/164/181328/Egypt/Egypt-Elections-/Egypt-parliament-forms-committee-to-investigate-co.aspx>

## 8. NORTH AFRICA

- **Libya Rivals Announce Unity Government**

Rival Libyan factions negotiating through a U.N.-brokered process have announced a unity government aimed at stemming the chaos that has engulfed the country since its 2011 uprising.

More Details:

<http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/libya-rivals-announce-unity-government-36370301>

- **A Terror State in Libya**

Islamic State fighters launched a naval assault in northern Libya last week, dispatching three boats that fired on an oil terminal at Zueitina. Local guards repelled that attack, but it was a reminder of Islamic State's growing capabilities and reach beyond its heartland in Syria and Iraq. Too bad Western capitals seem unprepared to stop it.

More Details:

<http://www.wsj.com/articles/a-terror-state-in-libya-1453159091>

- **Morocco arrests Belgian with 'direct links' to Paris attackers**

Morocco said Monday it had arrested a Belgian man of Moroccan descent who it said was directly linked with some of those behind the Islamist militant attacks in Paris in November.

More Details:

<http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/2/9/181353/World/International/Morocco-arrests-Belgian-with-direct-links-to-Paris.aspx>

- **Algeria: China, Algeria to Build Mega Sea Port**

Algeria and China on Sunday inked a 3.3-billion-U.S-dollar deal to build and exploit the new center transshipment port of Cherchel.

More Details:

<http://allafrica.com/stories/201601181667.html>

- **First Delegate Sacked As Violence Erupts In Kasserine**

The First Delegate of the Governate of Kasserine has been removed from post by Head of Government, Habib Essid following widespread protests and an attack on the local government headquarters, following the death on Saturday of an unemployed man.

More Details:

<http://www.tunisia-live.net/2016/01/18/first-delegate-sacked-as-violence-erupts-in-kasserine/>

- **Algeria's role in achieving peace agreement in Mali, crucial**

Algeria has played a key role in the achievement of the peace and reconciliation agreement between the Malian parties, said Monday in Algiers Malian Minister of Employment, Vocational Training, Youth and Civic Education, Mahamane Baby.

More Details:

<http://www.aps.dz/en/algeria/10372-algeria-s-role-in-achieving-peace-agreement-in-mali,-crucial>

- **Algiers, Bamako satisfied with “positive” progress in peace process in Northern Mali**

Algeria and Mali expressed their satisfaction with the “positive” progress in the peace process in Northern Mali, said Monday a joint statement at the end of the 10th Algerian-Malian Bilateral Strategic Committee on Northern Mali.

More Details:

<http://www.aps.dz/en/algeria/10382-algiers,-bamako-satisfied-with-%E2%80%9Cpositive%E2%80%9D-progress-in-peace-process-in-northern-mali-joint-statement>

- **Algeria's trade deficit hit \$13.71 billion in 2015(18th Jan)**

Algeria's trade balance recorded a deficit of \$13.71 billion in 2015, against a surplus of \$4.306 billion in 2014, Finance Ministry told APS.

More Details:

[http://www.aps.dz/en/economy/10380-algeria-s-trade-deficit-hit-\\$13-71billion-in-2015](http://www.aps.dz/en/economy/10380-algeria-s-trade-deficit-hit-$13-71billion-in-2015)

- **Draft law on violence against women to be submitted to government next March 26**

The draft organic law on violence against women will be submitted to the government next March 26 for adoption, Minister of Women, Family and Child Samira Merai announced Monday.

More Details:

<http://www.tap.info.tn/en/index.php/society/32637-draft-law-on-violence-against-women-to-be-submitted-to-government-next-march-26>

## 9. AFGHANISTAN – PAKISTAN

- **Afghanistan to hold delayed parliamentary elections in October**

Afghanistan will hold postponed parliamentary elections in October, the top election official said on Monday, after last June's deadline to choose a new assembly was missed because of political squabbling. Parliament's five-year term expired last June, but elections were postponed because of security fears and disagreements on how to ensure a fair vote after a bitterly disputed presidential election in 2014.

More Details:

<http://www.businessinsider.com/r-afghanistan-to-hold-delayed-parliamentary-elections-in-october-2016-1>

- **Afghanistan stability vital for regional peace**

Chairman Pakhtunkhwa Milli Awami Party (PkMAP) Mehmood Khan Achakzai has said peace is not possible in the region without stability in Afghanistan and having cordial relationship with neighbouring country India.

More Details:

<http://www.thenews.com.pk/print/92061-Afghanistan-stability-vital-for-regional-peace#sthash.NuHHkHSs.dpuf>

- **The US spent half a billion dollars on mining in Afghanistan with 'limited progress'**

The United States has spent nearly half a billion dollars and five years developing Afghanistan's oil, gas and minerals industries – and has little to show for it, a government watchdog has reported.

More Details:

<http://scroll.in/article/801912/the-us-spent-half-a-billion-dollars-on-mining-in-afghanistan-with-limited-progress>

- **Photo of Reza Gul, Mutilated Woman, Provokes Revulsion in Afghanistan**

The gruesome photograph of a bloodied young woman whose nose was sliced off has prompted outrage in Afghanistan, a country hardened by decades of violence.

More Details:

<http://www.nbcnews.com/news/world/photo-mutilated-woman-provokes-revulsion-afghanistan-n498966>

- **Near miss for Malcolm Turnbull in Afghanistan**

Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull was en route to Washington from Afghanistan when a rocket hit a compound next to the palace he had visited hours earlier. Mr Turnbull was at the palace in Kabul on Sunday to meet with Afghanistan President Dr Ashraf Ghani.

More Details:

<http://www.smh.com.au/federal-politics/political-news/near-miss-for-malcolm-turnbull-in-afghanistan-20160118-gm8mev.html#ixzz3xgJ1V5QU>

- **Near miss for Malcolm Turnbull in Afghanistan**

At least 10 people were killed and over 20 wounded when a bomb exploded near a security checkpoint situated close to the Karkhano Market area here on Tuesday, rescue officials said.

More Details:

<http://www.dawn.com/news/1233981/10-killed-in-blast-targeting-security-forces-vehicle-in-khyber>



- **Kabul warns Taliban not to delay peace talks**

A second round of four-country talks aimed at reviving the peace negotiations with the Taliban was held here on Monday, even as the Taliban wage an unprecedented winter campaign of violence across Afghanistan.

More Details:

<http://www.thenews.com.pk/print/92172-Kabul-warns-Taliban-not-to-delay-peace-talks#sthash.C9RuH5pG.dpuf>

- **PPP's ex-envoy to US, Indian lobbies working against F-16 deal: defence minister**

Defence Minister Khawaja Asif during a National Assembly briefing on Tuesday said that a deal with the United States for the procurement of eight F-16 fighter jets is facing delays due to "some lobbyists working against us there".

More Details:

<http://www.dawn.com/news/1233991/ppps-ex-envoy-to-us-indian-lobbies-working-against-f-16-deal-defence-minister>

- **Afghanistan Wants 'Red Lines' in Peace Process**

Afghanistan Minister of Foreign Affairs Salahuddin Rabbani, in his opening statement Monday to a meeting of delegates of United States, China, Pakistan, and Afghanistan in Kabul, emphasized the need for "red lines" for an effective road map to peace in Afghanistan.

More Details:

<http://www.afghanistannews.net/index.php/sid/240365929#sthash.SnQlxSlc.dpuf>

## 10.TURKEY AND THE MIDDLE EAST

- **Rocket shelling from Syria kills one in Turkey's Kilis**

One died and one wounded after a rocket shelling hit an area of schools in Turkey's southern province of Kilis, near the border with Syria at 09:30 local time on Monday. Kilis governorate announced that the school premises were hit by a "rocket projectile" thought to have been fired from Syria. Two other projectiles also landed on nearby waste land, according to the governorate's statement.

More Details:

<http://www.trtworld.com/turkey/rocket-shelling-from-syria-kills-one-in-turkeys-kilis-30007>

- **Turkey indispensable in anti-DAESH fight, former Nineveh governor says**

Former governor of Nineveh province, Atheel al-Nujaifi, said on Sunday that Turkey is the only country that provides military training to Iraq's National Mobilization Forces, which he founded for the operation to take Mosul from DAESH, and is an indispensable force in this fight. Nujaifi said at a press conference in Irbil that they feel grateful to Turkey since the country was the first to lend a helping hand to the forces, and said: "They have overtaken a leading role in training our forces and settling the camps. Turkey has never been late delivering support. The presidency of the Iraqi Kurdistan Regional Government [KRG] has also never withheld anything to provide the necessary support in this issue."

More Details:

<http://www.dailysabah.com/politics/2016/01/19/turkey-indispensable-in-anti-daesh-fight-former-nineveh-governor-says?>

- **New container city to house Syrian refugees in Turkish border town**

A new refugee camp will be built in Reyhanlı, a town in the southern Turkish province of Hatay that is situated near the border with Syria. The camp, designed to house 6,000 displaced Syrians, is the latest addition to Turkey's efforts to keep more of the nearly 2.5 million Syrians who fled into the country over the past five years sheltered amid the winter conditions.

More Details:

<http://www.dailysabah.com/nation/2016/01/19/new-container-city-to-house-syrian-refugees-in-turkish-border-town>

*\*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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