



MIDDLE EAST DAILY BULLETIN

GÜNLÜK ORTADOĞU BÜLTENİ

Domestic Policy in the Middle East Countries

Bölge Ülkelerinde İç Siyaset

The Restructuring Proces of Iraq

Irak'ın Yeniden Yapılanma Süreci

Energy Security

Enerji Güvenliği

Economy News

Ekonomi Haberleri

Peace Process

Barış Süreci

Ethnic and Secterian Groups

Etnik ve Mezhepsel Gruplar

Non State Actors

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Relations with the West

Batı'yla İlişkiler

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1. IRAQ,

- **Iraqi forces expel ISIS from all villages near the Hamrin Mountains says FPFC**

The Federal Police Forces Command announced on Monday that Iraqi Joint Forces managed to free all villages and areas surrounding the Hamrin Mountains from ISIS control. The Federal Police Command said in a statement posted on its website and followed by IraqiNews.com “Iraqi Joint Forces consisting of federal police elements and special intervention units backed by al-Hashed al-Sha’bi militia fighters liberated all of the areas and villages that surround Hamrin Mountains including Jalawla, al-Saidiyah and Qura-Taba areas.”

More Details:

<http://www.iraqinews.com/iraq-war/iraqi-joint-forces-liberate-the-entire-region-of-hamrin-mountains-from-isis-militants/>

- **IAF kills 35 ISIS fighters in central Ramadi**

The commander of al-Haq Police Department in Ramadi city, Maj. Omar Khamis, announced on Monday that 35 ISIS fighters were killed during an air strike that was carried out by the Army Air Force against ISIS sites in central Ramadi. Maj. Omar Khamis stated in an interview for IraqiNews.com “Today, the Iraqi Air Force (IAF) conducted air strikes against areas of vital importance to ISIS militants in the district of al-Hour, located in central Ramadi,” pointing out that, “The air strikes killed 35 ISIS elements.”

More Details:

<http://www.iraqinews.com/iraq-war/iaf-kills-35-isis-fighters-in-central-ramadi/>

- **Anbar police chief says ISIS positions near Ramadi are weakened**

Anbar province police chief Maj. Gen. Kazim Fahdawi announced on Monday the demise of ISIS’ threat against the city of Ramadi, adding that security forces achieved great victories in the city against the “terrorists.” Fahdawi said in an interview for IraqiNews.com, “The risk of the terrorist organization ISIS is removed from Ramadi significantly through military reinforcements arrived in the city to support the security sectors stationed there.”

More Details:

<http://www.iraqinews.com/iraq-war/anbar-police-chief-announces-demise-isis-risk-ramadi/>

- **Indonesian army attacks ISIS linked militants**

The commander of Indonesia's armed forces announced on Monday that the Indonesian army launched an operation to combat "terrorism" on the island of Sulawesi in eastern Indonesia to eliminate gunmen suspected of having links to ISIS in Iraq and Syria. Reuters news agency quoted the armed forces chief General Moeldoko as saying that, "the army helps the police in the island to track down terrorists and to shed light on the extent of the Indonesian government concerns of those who have pledged allegiance to ISIS and fought in Iraq and Syria to return to the largest Muslim country in terms of population after training there."

More Details:

<http://www.iraqinews.com/arab-world-news/indonesia-launches-military-campaign-isis-one-eastern-islands/>

- **Security forces advance into the west of Baiji, 15 ISIS militants killed**

A source within the Federal Police Forces revealed Monday, that the security forces managed to kill 15 ISIS fighters and advance into an area west of Baiji district. The source informed IraqiNews.com "Today, security forces had carried out an assault against ISIS sites in the area of Tal Abu Garad, located in west of Baiji," pointing out that, "Another force from the federal police killed 15 elements of the ISIS group in one of the neighborhoods in Baiji."

More Details:

<http://www.iraqinews.com/iraq-war/security-forces-advance-into-the-west-of-baiji-15-isis-militants-killed/>

- **Iraqi police regain control of hospital in central Ramadi**

On Monday, a security source in Anbar province said, that the security forces managed to kill a number of terrorists, who were hiding inside a hospital in central Ramadi. The source stated for IraqiNews.com, "Today, a force from the Rapid Intervention Units of the Federal Police Forces conducted an offensive against a group of terrorists, including snipers; they were hiding in a hospital near the government administration building in central Ramadi."

More Details:

<http://www.iraqinews.com/iraq-war/iraqi-police-regain-control-of-hospital-in-central-ramadi/>

- **ISIS executes 7 clan elders of Albu Sakr in Baiji**

MP for the National Forces Alliance Ali Alsjeri announced on Monday that ISIS executed 7 elders of the tribe of Albu Sakr in Baiji in Salahuddin province, on charges of cooperation with the security forces. Alsjeri's office said in a statement received by IraqiNews.com, "The organization ISIS executed

seven elders of the clan Albu Sakr in the district of Baiji, because they are relatives of the MP for the National Forces Alliance Ali Alsjeri.”

More Details:

<http://www.iraqinews.com/iraq-war/isis-executes-7-clan-elders-of-albu-sakr-in-baiji/>

- **Iraq and Egypt agree to form delegation to resolve outstanding financial issues**

The Office of the Finance Minister Hoshiyar Zebari announced Sunday, that Iraq has agreed with Egypt on forming a joint technical delegation to resolve the outstanding financial issues between the two countries. The Office of the Finance Minister Hoshiyar Zebari said in a statement obtained by IraqiNews.com “Today, Iraqi Finance Minister Hoshiyar Zebari met with his Egyptian counterpart Hany Qadri and discussed a number of financial topics of common interests, including Iraq’s debt to Egypt.”

More Details:

<http://www.iraqinews.com/baghdad-politics/iraq-and-egypt-agree-to-form-delegation-to-resolve-outstanding-financial-issues/>

- **Britain calls to dry ISIS resources: The organization is exploiting every dollar to destroy the Middle East**

The British government called on to make more international efforts to drain the financial resources of ISIS organization especially the ransom money and taxes. The spokesman of the British government spokesman in the Middle East and North Africa, Edwin Smoal said in a report to the British government in Arabic and published by the British Foreign Office site in Arabic, that Britain has made great efforts in this area through the UN Security Council resolutions relating to this file.

More Details:

<http://english.shafaaq.com/politics/14043-britain-calls-to-dry-isis-resources-the-organization-is-exploiting-every-dollar-to-destroy-the-middle-east.html>

- **Barzani: We are heading toward the biggest exodus from Mosul**

The Prime Minister of Kurdistan Region , Nechirvan Barzani expected heading towards a larger number of displaced people to the region in conjunction with the upcoming operation to liberate Mosul city and a number of other areas of Iraq, pointing out to the region’s need for help from international donations, particularly from the United Nations organizations.

More Details:

<http://english.shafaaq.com/politics/14046-barzani-we-are-heading-toward-the-biggest-exodus-from-mosul.html>

- **Adeeb: Islamic Studies in Iraq is fueling extremism and atonement**

The Head of State of Law coalition, MP Ali al-Adeeb considered on Monday, Islamic studies foundation as the seed to feed extremism and atonement in the country, which produced ISIS terrorist organization. Adeeb said in a speech during the founding of Iraq's youth conference, that the Islamic studies tried to feed extremism and atonement in Iraq and this is what happened, as graduates of institutes , colleges and universities adopt extremist thought and be the seed of ISIS organization.

More Details:

<http://english.shafaaq.com/politics/14049-adeeb-islamic-studies-in-iraq-is-fueling-extremism-and-atonement.html>

- **Abadi's Deputy confirms the existence of negligence from military leaders in Ramadi**

Deputy Prime Minister ,Bahaa al-Araji confirmed the existence of negligence by military leaders in Anbar province led to the progress of ISIS terrorists ISIS is waging a massive offensive on Ramadi and surrounding areas since the beginning of last week. As ISIS militants swept during the attack north of the city areas until they reached its center.

More Details:

<http://english.shafaaq.com/politics/14050-abadi%E2%80%99s-deputy-confirms-the-existence-of-negligence-from-military-leaders-in-ramadi.html>

- **Barzani and Kurdish political parties discuss three files in Erbil**

President of Kurdistan Region, Massoud Barzani and his deputy Kosert Rasool began a meeting with Kurdish political parties. A Kurdish source told "Shafaq News", that "the meeting would discuss the constitution issue, the presidency of the region and the visit of President Barzani to America ".

More Details:

<http://english.shafaaq.com/politics/14053-barzani-and-kurdish-political-parties-discuss-three-files-in-erbil.html>

- **Iraq talks about "signs": The body goes back to al-Duri, official announcement will be in two days**

Iraqi Minister of Human Rights announced the first outcome of Speicher victims after the drilling operations, while pointing to signs confirm that the body of the person who was killed in Hemrin

belongs to Izzat al-Duri. Muhammad Mahdi al-Bayati said that 10 mass graves have been discovered especially the victims of Speicher in presidential palaces complex in Tikrit city, in addition to three other mass graves discovered outside the complex.

More Details:

<http://english.shafaag.com/politics/14056-iraq-talks-about-signs-the-body-goes-back-to-al-duri,-official-announcement-will-be-in-two-days.html>

- **Security Forces liberate al- Bu Faraj area in Anbar province**

Security forces liberated yesterday, al- Bu Faraj area in the city of Ramadi from terrorist gangs of the so called the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant. According to al- Iraqiya Satellite Channel, the security forces liberated al- Bu Faraj area in the northern city of Ramadi from the ISIL terrorists and defused a number of booby trapped houses and roads within the region. Dozens of terrorists were killed and tens others fled into the desert.

More Details:

http://www.pukmedia.com/EN/EN_Direje.aspx?Jimare=33873

- **Iraq Fighting Triggers Humanitarian Crisis Near Baghdad**

Fighting between Islamic State and Iraqi security forces has displaced at least 90,000 civilians in the past several days, the United Nations said on Sunday, as a new humanitarian crisis unfolded on the fringes of the capital. Thousands of displaced people carried what few belongings they could across a floating bridge that forms the only connection between Anbar province—the heartland of Iraq’s Sunni minority—and Baghdad over the weekend. Most were fleeing the embattled city of Ramadi—Anbar’s provincial capital about 60 miles west of Baghdad. Fighting in Anbar intensified two weeks ago when provincial officials announced the start of a campaign to clear the province of Islamic State insurgents.

More Details:

http://www.pukmedia.com/EN/EN_Direje.aspx?Jimare=33878

- **An Iraqi Shiite militia group says DNA proves Saddam's right-hand man is dead**

An Iraqi Shi’ite militia group said on Sunday it had conducted DNA tests to prove the death of Ezzat al-Douri, former right-hand man to the late president Saddam Hussein, who after the 2003 U.S. invasion was ranked by Washington as the sixth most-wanted Iraqi. The Kataib Hizbollah group published a video on Saturday showing its fighters undressing the body of the man believed to be Douri, who was laid out on a metal trolley, and snipping off a piece of his flame-red beard.

"The final results prove that the body belongs to the criminal Ezzat al-Douri," the group's spokesman Jaafar Husseini told Reuters, saying his DNA had been tested in the Iranian-backed Kataib Hizbollah's own special hospitals. He did not reveal details of where those hospitals were located. "We are 100 per cent certain," he added without elaborating.

More Details:

http://www.pukmedia.com/EN/EN_Direje.aspx?Jimare=33880

- **20 ISIL Insurgents killed in Anbar Province**

The Interior Ministry announced, Monday 20 April 2015, that 20 ISIL Insurgents killed in Anbar province. The Interior Ministry said in a statement PUKmedia received a copy that the deployment of the rapid reaction Brigade commando Regiment killed 14 ISIL in Al- Sjarya during the security operation. On the other hand, security forces in Anbar liberated maternity hospital near Al Haouz from ISIL during the security operation.

More Details:

http://www.pukmedia.com/EN/EN_Direje.aspx?Jimare=33881

- **EU condemns 'criminal' killing of Ethiopian Christians**

The European Union denounced Monday the slaughter of at least 28 Ethiopian Christians in an ISIS video as a "criminal" effort to create religious divisions. "This not a clash of civilizations, this not a fight between Islam and the West," an EU spokesman said in a statement. "This is a criminal misuse of a noble religion to perpetrate terrorist attacks in a struggle for power." The video released Sunday by the jihadi group shows militants in Libya shooting and beheading captives, who are described in text captions as "followers of the cross from the enemy Ethiopian Church." "The EU stands together with the growing number of countries in Africa, which are battling terrorism and radicalization," the statement said.

More Details:

http://www.pukmedia.com/EN/EN_Direje.aspx?Jimare=33887

- **World Health Organization steps up response to growing health needs of Anbar IDPs**

Thousands of displaced people are crowded on the other side of the bridge in Amiriyat Al Falluja city. Health needs of the IDPs in this city are being met by WHO partner, UIMS which runs the IDPs Primary Health Care Center (PHCC) which was constructed and is supported by WHO. Six ambulances are deployed at Rudhwaniya to address the immediate health needs and provide the required healthcare. Two well-equipped mobile clinics, procured in June 2014 by WHO with financial support of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, will also arrive at the site shortly.

More Details:

http://www.pukmedia.com/EN/EN_Direje.aspx?Jimare=33888

- **ISIL executed 6,000 in Iraq's Anbar: Reports**

Media reports quoted official sources in Anbar as saying that the executions have taken place mainly in the city of Fallujah as well as the provincial capital, Ramadi, which are still under control of the ISIL terrorists. The United Nations has said ISIL's advance in the province and fierce fighting have forced tens of thousands of people to flee the region. According to the UN Humanitarian Agency, more than 90,000 people have fled Ramadi and three nearby villages. The Iraqi Army backed by volunteers has launched an operation to stop ISIL from advancing further into Ramadi.

More Details:

http://www.pukmedia.com/EN/EN_Direje.aspx?Jimare=33892

- **New batch of Christian volunteers to fight ISIL**

Some 2500 Christians have volunteered to back the Iraqi armed forces and Peshmerga forces in liberating their towns and villages in Nineveh province. Most of them are IDPs expelled by ISIL from regions neighboring Mosul. The new batch makes up 3 regiments. These regiments are to back the Iraqi army in the liberation of Mosul and maintaining security in Christian areas which have been taken back from ISIL. During the summer 2014 blitz which saw ISIL's advance into northern Iraq, the terror group took control over Christian regions east of Mosul. These areas include Tal-Kif, Bartella, Qaraqosh and other villages bordering Erbil.

More Details:

http://www.pukmedia.com/EN/EN_Direje.aspx?Jimare=33894

- **26 Airstrikes hit ISIL hideouts in Iraq**

The United States and its coalition partners targeted Islamic State militants with 36 air strikes in Syria and Iraq in a 24-hour, a statement from the Combined Joint Task Force. 26 of the strikes were in Iraq, hitting tactical units, sniper positions, weapons, vehicles and buildings near the cities of Fallujah, Kirkuk, Ramadi and Mosul. Near the Syrian cities of al Hasakah and Kobani, 10 air strikes destroyed an Islamic State fighting position, the statement said.

More Details:

http://www.pukmedia.com/EN/EN_Direje.aspx?Jimare=33896

- **Ramadi exodus compounds Iraq humanitarian crisis**

Some pushed wheelbarrows piled high with their belongings across the only bridge to Baghdad. Others balanced battered suitcases on their heads, or held babies aloft so they would not be crushed in the exodus from Iraq's western province of Anbar. More than 90,000 people have fled their homes in Anbar since April 8, when Islamic State militants began gaining ground around the provincial capital Ramadi, about 90 km (55 miles) from Baghdad, the United Nations said on Sunday. The latest migration compounds an intensifying humanitarian crisis in Iraq, where 2.7 million people have been displaced within the country since January 2014.

More Details:

http://www.pukmedia.com/EN/EN_Direje.aspx?Jimare=33897

- **Two snipers killed and three ISIS elements wounded in central Ramadi**

The commander of the Second Brigade Colonel , Mehdi Abbas Abdullah said on Monday, that a force affiliated to the Brigade managed to kill two snipers from "ISIS" in downtown Ramadi. ISIS terrorists were able to control the land around Ramadi, capital of Anbar province during the past week, which led to the displacement of thousands of families. The Iraqi government has sent support of the security forces and the Popular Mobilization Units to expel the organization.

More Details:

<http://english.shafaag.com/security/14044-two-snipers-killed-and-three-isis-elements-wounded-in-central-ramadi.html>

- **Human Rights: Security forces violate Abadi's guarantor decision for Anbar's displaced people**

The Independent High Commission for Human Rights said that it has spotted individual's actions in some security checkpoints in the capital Baghdad, by preventing or delaying the entry of Anbar's displaced people to move in areas of the capital. "Unfortunately, until now there are individual actions in some security checkpoints in the capital to prevent or delay the entry of displaced people of Anbar, a behavior contrary to the decision of the Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces to cancel the guarantor paragraph," calling "the senior leadership to held accountable to violators of the instructions of the Commander in Chief because they influence all security forces," The member of the Commission , Bushra al-Obeidi told "Shafaq News".

More Details:

<http://english.shafaag.com/security/14047-human-rights-security-forces-violate-abadi%E2%80%99s-guarantor-decision-for-anbar-s-displaced-people.html>

- **16 773 detainees released within 3 months**

Courts of the country freed 16 773 defendants who have not been convicted within three months, including 8631 defendants during last March. The judge , Abdul Sattar Bayrakdar , spokesman for the judiciary said that "all the appellate courts evacuated 16 773 defendants who were not proved of being guilty during January , February and March." "The court released 8631 detainees during last March only."

More Details:

<http://english.shafaag.com/security/14051-16-773-detainees-released-within-3-months.html>

- **8 ISIS elements killed while liberating Tel Abu Jarad area west of Baiji**

A security source in Salahuddin province revealed on Monday, that the security forces managed to liberated an area west of Baiji city, north of Tikrit after killing a number of ISIS terrorists . "The clashes are still ongoing on Sunday night and so far in al-Sekak neighborhood west of Baiji town ," The source told "Shafaq News".

More Details:

<http://english.shafaag.com/security/14052-8-isis-elements-killed-while-liberating-tel-abu-jarad-area-west-of-baiji.html>

- **Three PMU volunteers wounded in a roadside bomb explosion north of Diyala**

A security source in Diyala revealed that an element of the Popular Mobilization Units (PMU) was killed and three were injured when a roadside bomb targeted their patrol on the outskirts of al-Atheem sub-district, 60 km north of Baquba. The source told "Shafaq News" that a bomb exploded on a main road in Alnu Khayal village , 8 km north of al-Atheem targeting a patrol of PMU , killing one of its elements and injuring three others ".

More Details:

<http://english.shafaag.com/security/14054-three-pmu-volunteers-wounded-in-a-roadside-bomb-explosion-north-of-diyala.html>

- **Salahuddin demands for a military operation to the south to defeat ISIS**

Chairman of Salahuddin Provincial Council, Ahmed Karim called on Monday for a quick implementation of military operations in Dujail areas south of Salahuddin. Dujail (120 km south) is a Shiite town that the President of the former regime, Saddam Hussein had survived from an assassination attempt in the eighties of the last century.

More Details:

<http://english.shafaaq.com/security/14055-salahuddin-demands-for-a-military-operation-to-the-south-to-defeat-isis.html>

- **The mastermind of Erbil bombing arrested**

Kurdistan Region Security Council (Asaish) announced on Monday arresting the mastermind of the bombing, which targeted on Friday night Ankawa town in Erbil. The council said in a statement that , "After extensive investigations , Asaish forces in cooperation with citizens was able to arrest the mastermind of the bombing in Ankawa town yesterday evening."

More Details:

<http://english.shafaaq.com/security/14057-the-mastermind-of-erbil-bombing-arrested.html>

2. SYRIA

- **Assad: There are no Iranian troops in Syria**

Syrian President Bashar al-Assad said he invited Hezbollah fighters to fight alongside his regime but has denied the presence of Iranian troops in Syria in an interview with French television. Assad also said that French security officials had been in contact with the Syrian government regarding the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) armed group. Iran is Assad's main regional ally, and Tehran has acknowledged sending military advisers to assist his forces in their fight against rebels and ISIL, the AFP news agency reported.

More details:

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2015/04/assad-iranian-troops-syria-150420221544222.html>

- **President al-Assad to 'France 2 TV': "France was a spearhead in supporting terrorism..."**

President al-Assad to 'France 2 TV': "The coalition against terrorism cannot be formed by countries who support the terrorists at the same time, so we don't care whether they attack it in Syria, or Iraq, or both, as long as they support the same terrorists at the same time. They send weapons to the same terrorists under the title of moderate opposition when Obama said it's elusive, so the armaments will actually go to whom? To the terrorists. So, this is contradiction. It doesn't work"

More details:

<https://syrianfreepress.wordpress.com/2015/04/21/assad-france-2/>

- **Security Council demands aid access to Syria's Yarmouk camp**

The U.N. Security Council on Monday demanded that aid workers be allowed to distribute food and other supplies to refugees trapped by fighting inside Syria's Yarmouk camp. The 15-member council also demanded that fighters from the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) group and the Al-Qaeda-linked Al-Nusra Front withdraw, and that bombing raids on the Palestinian refugee camp be halted.

More details:

<http://english.alarabiya.net/en/News/middle-east/2015/04/21/Security-Council-demands-aid-access-to-Syria-s-Yarmouk-camp.html>

- **Opinion: From Aleppo to Yarmouk, All is "Unreasonable"**

A few days ago, members of the UN Security Council watched a video showing a Syrian doctor attempting to rescue children who had allegedly been the victims of a chlorine gas attack by Syrian government forces. After viewing the video, the United States' ambassador to the UN, Samantha Power, commented: "If there was a dry eye in the room, I didn't see it." There are clearly many officials around the world who are still moved by the plight of the Syrian people—to tears, in this case. But this is perhaps what is most surprising about the above incident. For in recent months, when the barbarity of the Islamic State of Iraq Syria (ISIS) has come to the fore, the crimes of the Assad regime have almost been airbrushed out of existence, sometimes even being downplayed or tacitly accepted.

More details:

<http://www.aawsat.net/2015/04/article55343011/opinion-from-aleppo-to-yarmouk-all-is-unreasonable>

- **UN Urges \$30 Million for Palestinian Refugees in Syria Camp**

The U.N. Security Council is calling for \$30 million in emergency aid to help Palestinian refugees in the embattled Yarmouk camp in the Syrian capital. The council called for unhindered humanitarian access and protection of civilians inside the U.N. camp, now mainly controlled by Islamic State militants following heavy fighting this month.

More details:

<http://abcnews.go.com/US/wireStory/urges-30-million-palestinian-refugees-syria-camp-30455601>

- **Syrian army says seizes villages in Deraa, cuts rebel supply line**

The Syrian army said on Monday it had captured several villages in the southern province of Deraa, cutting a supply route used by insurgents to smuggle weapons and fighters from Jordan to Damascus's Eastern Ghouta region.

More details:

<http://english.alarabiya.net/en/News/middle-east/2015/04/20/Syrian-army-says-seizes-villages-in-Deraa-cuts-rebel-supply-line.html>

- **426 children killed in Syria gas attack: report**

The devastating gas attack on Syrian civilians that took place in August 2013 killed more than 1,400 people — including 426 children, it was revealed Sunday. The extent of the assault in a Damascus suburb — which the UN secretary-general called “a crime against humanity” — was disclosed in a new US intelligence estimate, according to a “60 Minutes” report.

More details:

<http://nypost.com/2015/04/20/426-children-killed-in-syria-gas-attack-report/>

- **Latest barbaric video from ISIS shows black-clad executioner force three men on to their hands and knees before beheading them in street**

Three men accused of being agents of the Syrian government have been executed in a shocking new video, Islamic State has claimed. The barbaric footage, released earlier today, shows the men kneeling in the middle of a dusty road in Deir ez-Zor, Syria, as a militant brandishing a sharpened sword stands behind them. It comes just one day after the extremist group claim to have shot and beheaded more than 30 Ethiopian Christians in Libya.

More details:

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3047253/Syria-s-never-ending-slaughter-goes-black-clad-ISIS-executioner-forces-three-men-hands-knees-dusty-road-beheads-them.html#ixzz3XvfbTgZz>

- **Are Turkey and Saudi Arabia Going to War in Syria?**

In October 2014, Turkish Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu told CNN’s Christian Amanpour that, should the United States impose a no-fly-zone, Turkey would deploy troops in Northern Syria. Thereafter, Ankara released a map describing a Turkish and American-patrolled buffer zone that included Turkey’s entire border with Syria, except for the Islamic State-controlled area surrounding the city of Tel Abyad.

More details:

<http://warontherocks.com/2015/04/are-turkey-and-saudi-arabia-going-to-war-in-syria/>

- **Assad regime ready to accept Kurdish autonomy in Syrian Kurdistan: minister**

A Syrian minister has indicated that the Bashar al-Assad regime is willing to accept Kurdish autonomy in Syrian Kurdistan in the north of the war-torn country, where Kurdish forces have been engaged in fierce fighting with ISIS.

More details:

<http://ekurd.net/assad-regime-ready-to-accept-kurdish-autonomy-in-syrian-kurdistan-2015-04-20>

- **More Details in the FBI's Probe of Ohio Terror Suspect**

COLUMBUS, Ohio—Three months after he returned from training with violent extremists in Syria, a 23-year-old Ohio man hosted a shooting group at a local gun range, federal authorities allege in newly unsealed court papers.

More details:

<http://www.wsj.com/articles/more-details-in-the-fbis-probe-of-ohio-terror-suspect-1429589161?tesla=y>

- **Alabama woman, daughter of American-Islamic relations leader, flees family to join Islamic State**

A 20-year-old woman from a Birmingham, Alabama suburb has left the United States to join the Islamic State militant group in Syria, local broadcaster WIAT reported on Monday. The report came as US authorities said they have charged six young Somali-American men from Minnesota with planning to join the fighters who have declared an Islamic Caliphate on land they have seized in Syria and neighboring Iraq.

More details:

<http://www.jpost.com/Middle-East/Alabama-woman-daughter-of-American-Islamic-relations-leader-flees-family-to-join-Islamic-State-398773>

3. IRAN

- **'Iran charges detained US journalist'**

"An American-Iranian journalist jailed in Iran faces four charges, including one of espionage. Lawyer Leilah Ahsan, who represents Jason Rezaian, told the Washington Post that the correspondent also faces charges of "conducting propaganda against the establishment", "collaborating with hostile governments" and "collecting information about internal and foreign policy and providing them to individuals with malicious intent". Mr Rezaian has been the newspaper's correspondent in Tehran

since 2012 and has been held by Iranian authorities since July 22. He was born and spent most of his life in the United States, and holds Iranian and American citizenship. Iran does not recognize dual nationalities for its citizens Mr Rezaian's family, the Post and the US State Department have repeatedly called for the journalist's immediate release.”

More Details:

<http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/world-news/iran-charges-detained-us-journalist-31158284.html>

- **‘Iran wants OPEC to pave way for its extra oil production when sanctions lifted’**

“Members of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) should prepare for extra Iranian crude production when Western sanctions on Tehran are lifted, Iran's oil minister was quoted on Tuesday by state news agency IRNA as saying. "We expect the members of OPEC to pave the ground for (an) increase of Iran's oil production that will reach global markets when sanctions are lifted," Bijan Namdar Zanganeh said during a meeting with his Venezuelan counterpart Asdrubal Chavez in Tehran, the agency reported. Iran, once OPEC's second-largest producer after Saudi Arabia, hopes to boost crude exports by as much as 1 million barrels per day (bpd) if Tehran and six major powers finalize a nuclear agreement by a June 30 deadline. Sanctions imposed by the European Union and the United States have halved Iran's oil exports to just over 1 million barrels per day since 2012. Lower oil prices have also caused pain for OPEC's less wealthy producers like Iran, which has repeatedly called for an output cut of OPEC's target daily production. But Gulf OPEC members, including Saudi Arabia, have refused to cut output that is currently at 30 million bpd.”

More Details:

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/04/21/us-opec-iran-production-idUSKBN0NC0JO20150421?rpc=401>

- **‘US warship heads to Yemeni waters; could block Iran weapons’**

“The Navy aircraft carrier, USS Theodore Roosevelt is steaming toward the waters off the country to beef up security and join other American ships that are prepared to intercept any Iranian vessels carrying weapons to the Houthi rebels. The deployment comes after a UN Security Council resolution approved last week imposed an arms embargo on the leaders of the Iranian-backed Shiite Houthi rebels. The resolution passed in a 14-0 vote with Russia abstaining. Navy officials said Monday that the Roosevelt was moving through the Arabian Sea. A massive ship that carries F/A-18 fighter jets, the Roosevelt is seen more of a deterrent and show of force in the region. The Navy has been beefing up its presence in the Gulf of Aden and the southern Arabian Sea in response to reports that a convoy of about eight Iranian ships is heading toward Yemen and possibly carrying arms for the Houthis. Navy officials said there are about nine U.S. warships in the region, including cruisers and destroyers carrying teams that can board and search other vessels.”

More Details:

<http://rudaw.net/english/middleeast/21042015>

- **‘Iran and Australia agree to share intelligence on Daesh foreign fighters’**

“Australia and Iran will share intelligence to track foreign fighters working with the Islamic State (Daesh) group in Iraq, Foreign Minister Julie Bishop said on Monday, as lawmakers urged caution. In the first trip to Iran by an Australian minister in more than a decade, Bishop said it would be an informal arrangement. Her comments came after a meeting with Iranian counterpart Mohammad Javad Zarif, President Hassan Rouhani and Ali Akbar Velayati, foreign affairs advisor to Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. "We have a common purpose with Iran in defeating Daesh and helping the Iraqi government," she told the Australian Broadcasting Corporation, using an Arabic acronym to refer to the militant IS group. "During my discussions with the national leadership here, it was agreed that we could share intelligence, particularly on the foreign terrorist fighters from Australia who are taking part in this conflict in Iraq." More than 100 Australians have travelled to Iraq and Syria to fight with the militants, raising concerns about the threat of 'home-grown' extremists. On Saturday, two men were arrested in Melbourne for allegedly planning an IS-inspired attack at Anzac Day commemorations on April 25 honouring soldiers who fought and died for Australia. Bishop said Tehran had a strong military presence and long relationship with Iraq, coupled with a sophisticated intelligence network in places where Canberra had no presence.”

More Details:

<http://www.albawaba.com/news/iran-and-australia-agree-intelligence-sharing-deal-daesh-684712>

- **‘Iran Offers Joint Arms Production to Azerbaijan’**

“Iranian Defense Minister Brigadier General Hossein Dehqan and Azeri Minister of Defense Industry Yavar Jamalov in a meeting in Baku underlined the need for the two neighboring states to widen cooperation in manufacturing defense industry products. "The defense industry exchanges can help enhance technical cooperation in military fields," Dehqan said during the meeting on Monday. The Iranian defense minister reiterated that there are very good opportunities for the further expansion of mutual cooperation, and said, "Both sides should take these chances to upgrade their defense and technological capabilities." Brigadier General Dehqan said that Iran considers Azerbaijan an independent, advanced and powerful nation. He pointed to the abundant capabilities and capacities of Iran's defense ministry in different areas, and underlined the need for expediting the pace of cooperation between Iran and Azerbaijan. The Azeri minister of defense industry, for his part, reiterated that Iran and Azerbaijan are two friendly and brotherly countries, and said, "The Azeri people will always remember Iran as the first country that recognized the independence of Azerbaijan." Jamalov referred to his previous visit to Iran during which Baku and Tehran signed a cooperation protocol, and said, "Continued cooperation will benefit both countries, reinforce their defense power and result in tranquility, security and stability in the region." The Azeri minister of

defense industry expressed the hope that Brigadier General Dehqan's visit to Baku would help enhance cooperation in different defense, military and technical areas.”

More Details:

<http://english.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13940201000416>

- **‘1st Int'l Microscopic Image Contest in Iran’**

“Iran is to host the First International Microscopic Image Contest planned for May 6 for two days. Eight states will participate in the international contest to be held at the Amirkabir University of Technology. The participating states include Canada, Italy, Spain, Japan, Germany, the US, Romania, Netherlands and Iran. The winner will be awarded a 500\$ prize. Also 300\$ and 200\$ prizes will be awarded to those who stand at the second and third places respectively. According to the university website, the contest features the best microscopic works of researchers and students and highlights the latest advances and innovations in microscopic imaging.”

More Details:

<http://www.irna.ir/en/News/81579259/>

- **‘Iran proceeds with nuclear talks seriously – president Rouhani’**

“Iranian President Hassan Rouhani says the country is proceeding with the nuclear talks seriously. He added that talks with the P5+1 group on the country’s nuclear program are progressing, Iran’s IRNA news agency reported on April 21. He reiterated that an agreement would be beneficial to all. Rouhani made the remarks before leaving Tehran for attending the 60th Commemoration of Asian-African Conference in Jakarta, capital city of Indonesia. Rouhani is scheduled to hold meetings with heads of states, Islamic intellectuals, university professors, as well as Indonesian traders and businessmen. Through a prospective deal is expected to be signed by June 30, Iran will limit its nuclear activities as a trust-building move toward the international community. In return, the economic sanctions on Iran's economy will be lifted. The deal envisions at least a 10-year cooperation period between the Islamic Republic and the group 5+1 (the US, UK, France, Russia, China, and Germany).”

More Details:

<http://en.trend.az/iran/nuclearp/2386197.html>

- **‘Bus accident leaves 30 killed, injured in Iran’**

“At least 30 people were killed and injured in a passenger bus accident in Iran ’s northern Mazandaran province, Iran ’s Tasnim news agency reported April 21. The incident took place near the Iranian city of Firouzkouh at 08:30 local time (GMT +4:30 hours) due to mechanical failure in the

braking system of the bus. The bus was in route from Mazandaran to Tehran. Authorities have identified 11 bodies so far, Ali Nabian, deputy governor of Mazandaran province said. The road was reopened for traffic 1.5 hours after the accident.”

MoreDetails:

<http://en.trend.az/iran/society/2386221.html>

4. ISRAEL – PALESTINE

- **Gaza fallout: 'I cannot understand these crimes'**

A new report suggests that Israel directly targeted Palestinian children during the Gaza war. Jabaliya, Gaza Strip - Issam Abu Mustafa Joudeh struggled to hold back tears as he recalled the drone strike that killed his wife and four of his children during the 51-day war in Gaza last summer. Around 4pm on August 24, 2014, just two days before a lasting ceasefire was reached, Issam went inside to prepare lunch while his wife and five of their kids played outside in the yard. "I was talking to them at the time," he told Al Jazeera. "I hollered at them out the window to see if they were hungry. Then I heard a loud whiz, followed by an explosion, and the whole house rumbled."

More details:

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2015/04/gaza-fallout-understand-crimes-150420130139305.html>

- **Palestinian teen torched to death by nationalist Jews to be honored at Memorial Day ceremony**

Muhammad Abu Khdeir, the 16-year-old Palestinian from the east Jerusalem village of Shuafat who was burned to death last summer by nationalist Jewish Israelis in a revenge attack following the kidnapping of three teenage yeshiva students near Hebron last year, has been added to the list of names that appears on the memorial plaque on Mt. Herzl commemorating the civilians who died in terrorist attacks this past year.

More details:

<http://www.jpost.com/Israel-News/Palestinian-teen-torched-to-death-by-nationalist-Jews-to-be-honored-at-Memorial-Day-ceremony-398775>

- **Hamas: Ministers not authorized to sign employees deal**

A Hamas spokesman said Monday that ministers of the unity government informed him they were leaving the Gaza Strip upon instructions by Prime Minister Rami Hamdallah after failing to register civil servants. Sami Abu Zuhri said in news conference that he was informed that the cabinet did not have the authority to reach any agreement.

More details:

<http://www.maannews.com/eng/ViewDetails.aspx?ID=760597>

- **Israeli President Gives Netanyahu Until May 6 to Form Government**

Israel's president on Monday gave Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu an extension until May 6 to form a new government, as negotiations continued among various political parties. President Reuven Rivlin had assigned Mr. Netanyahu to form a coalition after the March 17 elections, when 67 Parliament members from six right-leaning parties recommended that he continue as prime minister.

More details:

<http://www.nytimes.com/2015/04/21/world/middleeast/benjamin-netanyahu-reuven-rivlin-may-6-government.html?ref=middleeast>

- **Netanyahu and Kahlon closer to coalition deal**

Negotiators from the Likud and Kulanu parties are working on formulating a coalition agreement, according to a statement released late Monday night after a meeting between Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Kulanu leader Moshe Kahlon.

More details:

<http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-4649376,00.html>

- **Israel: Leaders Decline to Meet Carter**

Israel's president and prime minister have declined requests for meetings with former President Jimmy Carter, who has long been a harsh critic of Israel's policy toward the Palestinians.

More details:

<http://www.nytimes.com/2015/04/21/world/middleeast/israel-leaders-decline-to-meet-carter.html?ref=middleeast>

- **Palestine's empty breadbasket**

Israeli occupation forces prevented dozens of Palestinian farmers last Dec. 9 from cultivating tens of thousands of acres of their land in Khirbet Ain al-Sakut, in the northern Jordan Valley in the West Bank. Israel declared the region a closed military zone, as it has with several other regions in the Jordan Valley, such as the Wadi al-Maleh village.

[More details:](#)

<http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2015/04/palestine-israel-jordan-valley-farmers-banned-entry.html#ixzz3XvizL0s5>

- **Why does Netanyahu really want to sabotage the Iran deal?**

Let us assume for a moment that a major terrorist attack with multiple casualties occurs in downtown New York this week and that it can be traced back to Tehran. Would President Barack Obama instruct Secretary of State John Kerry to maintain a “business as usual” approach toward Iran in the negotiations to freeze its nuclear program in return for lifting sanctions? Let us assume that a Mexican anti-American terrorist organization with thousands of missiles supplied and funded by Iran aimed its missiles at major cities across the southern United States. Would the president need Congress' approval to demand that continued negotiations depend on the immediate removal of those missiles from his country's border?

More details:

<http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2015/04/netanyahu-nuke-deal-iranian-recognition-of-israel-us-obama.html#ixzz3XvjAHYOG>

- **Israel Alone**

Previous quarrels between Washington and Jerusalem were about differing Mideast perceptions. Now the issue is how the U.S. perceives itself. Recent conversations with senior Israeli officials are shot through with a sense of incredulity. They can't understand what's become of U.S. foreign policy.

More details:

<http://www.wsj.com/articles/israel-alone-1429573067?tesla=y>

- **Israel's most important strategic interest still lies with US**

In the past week, the attention on the Iranian issue focused on the conduct of the United States and Western European countries: At first we followed the political drama in Washington, at the end of which Israeli government spokespeople announced their great success following the compromise imposing procedures which limit US President Barack Obama's authorities in regards to the nuclear agreement's approval, if such an agreement will indeed be reached.

More details:

<http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-4648905,00.html>

5. JORDAN and LEBANON

- **King calls for clear strategy to develop education, human resources'**

"His Majesty King Abdullah on Monday stressed the importance of drawing up a clear national strategy with a fixed time frame to deal with the challenges facing the education and human resources sectors. At a meeting with members of the National Committee for Human Resources Development at the Husseinia Palace, the King highlighted the need to enhance citizens' belief in the quality and efficiency of the country's educational system, according to a Royal Court statement. His Majesty, in the presence of Her Majesty Queen Rania, said the committee's agenda and vision should conform to the outcomes of the 10-year economic blueprint (2015-2025), and build on the efforts of the Royal consultative committee on education and previous studies in the field. In March, King Abdullah sent a letter to the prime minister directing him to establish a national committee for human resources development, highlighting the urgent need for Jordan to develop an integrated, comprehensive, strategic and well-defined system for human resources development. Proof of the committee's success is the implementation of the strategy on the ground, and making a qualitative leap in education that has tangible results felt by citizens, the King added, according to the statement."

More Details:

<http://jordantimes.com/king-calls-for-clear-strategy-to-develop-education-human-resources>

- **'Jordan King reaffirms support to Iraq's political process'**

"King Abdullah II, of Jordan, on Monday renewed the support of his country to the political process in neighboring Iraq. During his meeting with Iraqi Parliament Speaker Saleem Al-Jubouri, Iraqi Vice President Osama Al-Nujaifi and Deputy Prime Minister Saleh Al-Mutlaq, the King said the process that involves the broad political spectrum in Iraq could contribute to national concord and the rebuilding of a strong and coherent country. King Abdullah II said Jordan is committed to backing up the sovereignty, security, stability and territorial integrity of Iraq, according to a statement by the Royal Court. The two sides reviewed the latest developments of the security and political situations in Iraq as well as the efforts of the Iraqi government to fight the terrorist organizations. The senior Iraqi officials briefed the King on the latest developments in their country and appreciated the supportive stance of the Kingdom of Jordan towards their country, the statement added."

More Details:

<http://www.kuna.net.kw/ArticleDetails.aspx?id=2436993&Language=en>

- **‘Foreign minister to chair UN Security Council session Tuesday’**

“Jordan, which is currently assuming the rotating presidency of the UN Security Council, will Tuesday chair a session on a number of key Middle East issues and counter-terrorism efforts. The session, which will be chaired Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates Affairs Nasser Judeh, will address the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and the raging crises in Syria, Yemen and Libya as well as efforts to combat terrorism and extremism. Judeh will also participate tomorrow in a panel discussion at the United Nations General Assembly on tolerance, peace and countering extremism, said Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates Affairs official spokeswoman, Sabah al-Rafie. She added that His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hussein Bin Abdullah II will chair a debate on the "Role of Youth in Countering Violent Extremism and Promoting Peace". Al-Rafie noted that Judeh will Friday chair a Council's session on the Syrian refugee crisis and its implications on neighboring countries, including Jordan. On April 27th, the foreign minister will participate in a trilateral meeting with U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry and Egyptian Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry to discuss the situation in Yemen, as well as other issues in the region and the war on terrorism.”

More Details:

http://petra.gov.jo/Public_News/Nws_NewsDetails.aspx?Site_Id=1&lang=2&NewsID=192302&CatID=-1

- **‘Labor Minister reviews Syrian crisis impact on Jordan’**

“Labor Minister Nidal Qatameen reviewed the impact of the influx of Syrian refugees on Jordan's labor market during the 42 session of the Arab labor conference currently taking place in Kuwait. Qatameen, who led the Jordanian delegation comprising the three components of production in the Kingdom, government, employers' organizations and labor, said Syrians who fled to Jordan to escape from violence that had erupted in their country, are a challenge for the Kingdom since the international aid to cover the impact they exerted on Jordan's economy has remained too scarce. During his speech before the plenary session of the Conference, he announced the withdrawal of the Jordanian candidate for the position of Director-General of the Arab Labor Organization, Adnan Abu Al-Ragheb, in favour of the Kuwaiti candidate, head of the General Union of Kuwait Workers, Fayez Al-Mutairi, who won the position for the next four years by acclamation after the withdrawal of all other candidates.”

More Details:

http://petra.gov.jo/Public_News/Nws_NewsDetails.aspx?Site_Id=1&lang=2&NewsID=192272&CatID=-1

- **‘Salam Says No to Unilateral Governance, Urges Speedy Election of President’**

“Prime Minister Tammam Salam warned Lebanon's bickering political parties on Tuesday that they would fail in governing the country without consensus, urging them to elect a new president without

further delay. “Lebanon is the only thing we've got. Putting it in danger is an unforgivable crime” such as the crime of the presidential vacuum, Salam said at the Lebanese Education Conference that was held at the Phoenicia hotel in Beirut. “No political party is capable of changing the circumstances in the region ... No single side would be able to succeed alone in deciding the fate of the country,” he stressed. “No side would be able to manage our internal affairs ... away from consensus,” the premier stated. Salam also urged all parties to speed up the election of a president to regulate the work of state institutions and normalize the country's constitutional life. The country has been without a head of state since President Michel Suleiman's six-year term ended in May last year. Differences between the March 8 and 14 alliances over a compromise candidate have caused the vacuum at Baabda Palace. Salam urged political parties to avoid verbal attacks and consolidate dialogue and rapprochement.”

More Details:

<http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/176248-salam-says-no-to-unilateral-governance-urges-speedy-election-of-president>

- **‘Samaha confesses to bombing plot’**

“Former Minister Michel Samaha confessed Monday that he had transported explosives into Lebanon with the aim of targeting Lebanese politicians and religious figures, claiming that he was lured to do so by a police intelligence agent. In a startling confession which shocked relatives, journalists and defense attorneys attending the military tribunal, Samaha detailed a plot which, if successfully implemented, could have pushed Lebanon into a cycle sectarian violence. Samaha appeared confused at times, faltering and contradicting himself, but claimed he was being watched by domestic and foreign intelligence services who convinced him to carry out the act, “satisfying my ambitions,” and that they used people close to him to persuade him to cooperate. “I fell into an intelligence trap set by Milad Kfoury, who [had been] my friend since 1992,” Samaha said, referring to the Internal Security Forces informant who revealed the plot.”

More Details:

<http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Lebanon-News/2015/Apr-21/295166-samaha-confesses-to-bombing-plot.ashx>

- **‘Al-Rahi to Travel to Armenia for Genocide Centennial’**

Maronite Patriarch Beshara al-Rahi is scheduled to travel to Armenia on Tuesday to attend the centenary commemoration of the Armenian genocide. Free Patriotic Movement chief MP Michel Aoun telephoned al-Rahi to wish him luck in his trip, the state-run National News Agency reported. They also discussed the developments in Lebanon and the region, it said. Armenians in Armenia and the diaspora, including Lebanon, will on April 24 mark the 100th anniversary of the start of a campaign of genocide by Ottoman forces in World War I to wipe them out of Anatolia. Turkey on

Monday sought to reach out to Armenians, saying it shared their pain and wanted to heal the wounds of the past. In his conciliatory message, Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu stopped well short of recognizing the killings as a genocide -- as Armenians want -- but explicitly referred to deadly deportations of "Ottoman Armenians." Historians estimate that up to 1.5 million Armenians were killed by Ottoman Turks around the time of World War I, an event widely viewed by scholars as the first genocide of the 20th century. Turkey however, denies that the deaths constituted genocide, saying the toll has been inflated, and that those killed were victims of civil war and unrest."

More Details:

<http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/176234-al-rahi-to-travel-to-armenia-for-genocide-centennial>

- **'Aoun threatens Cabinet if security chiefs stay'**

"As the government scrambles to avoid a vacuum in the top military and security posts, Free Patriotic Movement leader MP Michel Aoun has decided to withdraw his three ministers from the Cabinet if it goes ahead with renewing the terms of the Army commander and the Internal Security Forces chief, sources close to Aoun's bloc said Monday. With the terms of Army commander Gen. Jean Kahwagi and ISF chief Maj. Gen. Ibrahim Basbous drawing to a close, the main political parties in the government have not yet agreed on candidates to succeed Basbous, who retires on June 5, and Kahwagi, who retires on Sept. 23. Most parliamentary blocs are in agreement on avoiding a vacuum in the military and ISF commands and therefore they support the extension of the terms of military and security chiefs."

More Details:

<http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Lebanon-News/2015/Apr-21/295159-aoun-threatens-cabinet-if-security-chiefs-stay.ashx>

6. ARABIAN PENINSULA AND THE GULF OF BASRA

- **'Naimi says Saudi oil production near record high in April'**

"Oil Minister Ali al-Naimi says Saudi Arabia is producing near record levels of crude in April, underscoring the kingdom's willingness to defend market share at a time when oil markets have staged a fragile recovery. There are worries among some producers that growing output from Saudi Arabia and other members of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) could snuff out a recent rebound in oil prices, particularly with economic growth in key consumer China the slowest in six years in the first quarter. OPEC had said its overall output surged to 30.79 million barrels per day in March, up 810,000 bpd from the previous month, with demand higher than expected due to lower prices. Naimi said that oil production in Saudi Arabia, the world's biggest crude exporter, was "around 10 million" bpd in April. "I have said many times we will always be happy to supply to our customers with what they want. Now they want 10 million," Naimi said in an

interview in the South Korean capital, where he is due to attend a board meeting of the state oil firm Saudi Aramco. Responding to the comments, benchmark Brent crude slipped from early highs to trade under \$64 a barrel.”

More Details:

<http://ameinfo.com/energy/oil-and-gas/oil-trade/naimi-says-saudi-oil-production-near-record-high-in-april/>

- **‘UAE remains top choice for Arab youths to live and work in’**

“The UAE has been chosen as country most Arab youths would most like to live in for the fourth consecutive year – and is the place they would most like their own nation to emulate. The Emirates was the top choice ahead of 20 other countries, including the United States, Germany and Canada, among 3,500 young people, aged 18 to 24, in the seventh annual Arab Youth Survey commissioned by communications firm Asda’a Burson- Marsteller and carried out by pollsters Penn Schoen Berland. “The popularity of the UAE is a reflection of the country’s strong economic outlook and status as a safe haven,” said Sunil John, chief executive of Asda’a Burson- Marsteller. “The economy of the Gulf state is expected to grow 3.5 per cent in 2015 and 2016 in spite of falling oil prices, according to the International Monetary Fund. “The country continues to invest in key infrastructure projects and social spending packages. “The UAE is also known as a country where young Arabs are encouraged to reach their full potential across a broad spectrum of industries from technology start-ups to the arts and finance, in a culture they are familiar with.” When asked to name a country they would like to emulate, almost a quarter (22 per cent) considered the UAE a model nation, followed by the United States (15 per cent), Germany (11 per cent), Canada (8 per cent) and France (8 per cent).”

More Details:

<http://www.thenational.ae/uae/uae-remains-top-choice-for-arab-youths-to-live-and-work-in>

- **‘Emirates steps into the wild to sponsor ‘The Last Wilderness of the UAE’**

“Emirates, a global connector of people, places and passions, has signed up to sponsor ‘The Last Wilderness of the UAE’, a documentary series that will feature the United Arab Emirates’ remarkably rich biodiversity. It will also provide insight into the natural adaptations that have enabled many species to survive in the Arabian Peninsula’s harsh and ever-changing habitats as well as showcase some of the most important conservation accomplishments over recent years. The three part documentary will be divided to focus on the ecosystems of the mountains and wadis, the deserts, and the seas of the UAE. Patrick Brannelly, Divisional Vice President Customer Experience for In-Flight Entertainment and Connectivity, commented on Emirates’ support of the documentary: “As a global airline with our base in Dubai, Emirates is committed to providing support for innovative projects that highlight the unknown incredible stories within the vibrant UAE ecosystem. Through supporting the creation of this documentary and then letting our passengers view it onboard our

flights, we hope to engage millions of our customers around the world and raise awareness about the abundant natural beauty found in the UAE's terrestrial and marine ecosystems."

More Details:

<http://ameinfo.com/transport-and-tourism/tourism/airlines-airports/emirates-steps-into-the-wild-to-sponsor-the-last-wilderness-of-the-uae/>

- **'HSBC banned from managing new funds in Saudi Arabia'**

"HSBC Holdings has been banned from taking on new funds at its Saudi Arabian asset management business after the regulator said it had breached local regulations, Bloomberg has reported, citing five people with knowledge of the matter. The kingdom's Capital Market Authority issued the order against HSBC Saudi Arabia's \$7 billion asset management arm late last year, demanding it overhaul compliance procedures, two people reportedly said. The breaches refer to local regulations and are not related to other investigations into HSBC overseas, the sources said. It was revealed in February that authorities in numerous countries were considering examining HSBC's actions in helping more than 100,000 wealthy individuals avoid paying tax, particularly with Swiss bank accounts."

More Details:

<http://www.arabianbusiness.com/hsbc-banned-from-managing-new-funds-in-saudi-arabia-590062.html>

- **'Kuwait partakes in the Asian-African summit in Indonesia'**

"Kuwait partook in the ministerial meeting of member states in the AsianAfrican conference on Monday in preparation for the Asian-African summit to be held in Jakarta. Kuwait's acting charge d'affaires in Jakarta Nasser Al-Khaldi said in remarks to KUNA by phone on Tuesday that that Kuwaiti delegation took part early yesterday in the ministerial meeting of the conference in preparation for the Asian-African summit that will kick off tomorrow in commemoration of the 60th Anniversary of the AsianAfrican Conference and the 10th Anniversary of the New Asian-African Strategic Partnership (NAASP). This conference comes to boost cooperation between the developing countries besides reviving the new strategic Asian-African partnership, as well as declaring the African-Asian support to Palestine, he said. Kuwait's participation in this event reflects its belief in the importance of the cooperation and coordination between the nationals of the Asian and African continents, Al-Khaldi affirmed. Kuwait is a pioneer in offering initiatives to improve ties with a large number of Asian and African countries, as it held a number of conferences on that matter, he added. A total of 109 world countries' leaders, besides representatives of 29 African and Asian countries gathered in that assembly, with the theme "Strengthening South-South Cooperation to Promote World Peace and Prosperity".

More Details:

<http://www.kuna.net.kw/ArticleDetails.aspx?id=2437073&Language=en>

- **‘Qatar Airways increases frequency to 10 destinations’**

“Qatar Airways, national airline of Qatar, plans to increase the frequency of weekly flights to 10 of its most popular destinations throughout the Middle East and Europe. The airline, which currently flies to 146 destinations around the globe, will implement the frequency increases over the next few months for a mix of business and leisure destinations. Commencing May 16, the airline will permanently increase weekly frequencies to seven destinations within its network. These include Ta’if and Gassim, Saudi Arabia; Basra and Najaf, Iraq; Ankara, Turkey; Zagreb, Croatia and Athens, Greece. The permanent frequency increases will see Ta’if, Zagreb and Ankara begin daily flight services commencing May 16, July 1 and July 3 respectively. Meanwhile, the service to two Iraqi destinations will double from four to eight flights per week with Basra beginning on May 16 and Najaf on June 2, while 10 flights per week will be offered to Gassim as of July 17.”

More Details:

http://www.tradearabia.com/news/TTN_280264.html

- **Yemen's Houthi fighters have tough record in ground war’**

“It's a nightly exercise in futility: Yemen's Houthis fire rifles at Saudi F-15 jets thundering overhead. But the guerrillas' Kalashnikovs would be more formidable if and when Saudi Arabia decided to fight a ground war. Cairo and Riyadh said this month they were discussing a "major military manoeuvre" in Saudi Arabia, a sign the Saudi-led alliance bombing the Houthis may make good on threats to launch a ground push across the kingdom's southern border into Yemen. The air campaign has made little headway since it began on March 26, prompted by the Iranian-allied Houthis's military takeover of large parts of Yemen. The Saudis and their allies see the push as an unacceptable extension of Tehran's reach into Riyadh's backyard, but have not committed to an invasion. The Houthis are confident their experience in mountain warfare in their northern stronghold would give their Arab adversaries pause. A 2009-2010 war against government forces backed by Saudi Arabia left around 200 Saudi soldiers dead.”

More Details:

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/04/21/yemen-security-houthis-idUSL5N0XG0GM20150421?rpc=401>

- **‘Qatar plans \$350 billion in development projects’**

“Qatar will invest around QR1.27 trillion (\$350 billion) in sustainable development over the next 15 years, said the organisers of the upcoming Project Qatar 2015, an international construction and building materials exhibition in Doha. The 12th edition of the event is scheduled to run from May 4

to 7 at the Qatar National Convention Centre. “Qatar in the run-up to the 2022 Fifa World Cup and in line with the National Vision 2030 document will be investing nearly \$350 billion,” George Ayache, general manager of IFP Qatar was quoted as saying in The Peninsula report.”

More Details:

http://www.tradearabia.com/news/CONS_280262.html

7. EGYPT

- **Egypt's Morsi sentenced to 20 years in jail**

A Cairo court has sentenced former Egyptian President Mohamed Morsi to 20 years in prison. Morsi was charged with inciting the killing of protesters, in connection to the deaths of 10 people outside the presidential palace in December 2012. He also faces serious charges in three other cases. Morsi was deposed by his then military chief and Minister of Defence Abdel Fattah el-Sisi after mass protests against his rule in the summer of 2013. Following the coup, the former president's supporters launched a series of protests and sit-ins across the country culminating in a crackdown by security forces that left hundreds dead.

More details:

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2015/04/egypt-morsi-sentenced-150421063227546.html>

- **Egypt sentences 22 members of Muslim Brotherhood to death**

An Egyptian court sentenced 22 members of the Muslim Brotherhood to death on Monday over an attack on a police station in a district outside Cairo in 2013, judicial sources said. The assault was part of a wave of violence that rocked the country after the army removed elected Islamist president Mohamed Morsi from power following mass protests against his rule in June 2013.

More details:

<http://www.jpost.com/Middle-East/Egypt-sentences-22-members-of-Muslim-Brotherhood-to-death-398684>

- **Mortar fire kills 2 children in Egypt's Sinai**

Mortar fire killed two five-year-old boys on Monday in Egypt's Sinai Peninsula, officials said, hours after a bomb killed three soldiers in the area where troops are fighting an Islamist insurgency. Mortar rounds struck a residential area south of the town of Sheikh Zuweid in North Sinai late on Monday in which the two boys were killed, medics said.

More details:

<http://www.news24.com/Africa/News/Mortar-fire-kills-2-children-in-Egypt-Sinai-20150421>

- **Egypt defense minister meets Greek counterpart in Cairo**

Egyptian Defense Minister Sedki Sobhi met Monday with his Greek counterpart, Panos Kammenos, to discuss means of boosting cooperation between the two countries. The meeting comes days before Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah al-Sisi is scheduled to meet Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras in Cyprus on April 29. "Defense Minister Sedki Sobhi met with Greek counterpart Panos Kammenos, who is currently visiting Egypt accompanied by a high-level delegation – including Greek army Chief Mikhail Kostarakos – for an official visit that will last several days," Egyptian army spokesman Mohamed Samir said in a statement.

More details:

<http://www.worldbulletin.net/news/158152/egypt-defense-minister-meets-greek-counterpart-in-cairo>

- **Iran, Turkey and Qatar excluded from Egypt Quran recitation competition**

Egypt's Ministry of Endowments has excluded participants from Iran, Turkey and Qatar from its International Quran Recitation Competition, Mohamed Abdel Razik, the ministry's official spokesperson said on Sunday. In media statements to Egyptian TV channel LTC, Abdel Razik said that the ministry had excluded the Iranian, Turkish and Qatari participants from the annual competition for "political reasons."

More details:

<http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/64/128204/Egypt/Politics-/Iran,-Turkey-and-Qatar-excluded-from-Egypt-Quran-r.aspx>

- **Kuwait sets new conditions for work permits to Egyptians**

Assistant Foreign Minister for Consular Affairs and Egyptians Abroad Amr Moawad said on Monday that Kuwait has developed new regulations for granting Egyptian expatriates work permits. Citizens will now have to present a clear criminal record certificate endorsed by the Egyptian interior and foreign ministries and the Kuwaiti Embassy in Cairo.

More details:

<http://www.egyptindependent.com/news/kuwait-sets-new-conditions-work-permits-egyptians>

- **Eni brags of oil production in Egypt**

Italian energy company Eni said Monday its oil production in the Western Desert of Egypt has reached a record level, doubling its rate in just three years. Eni said it's producing around 70,000 barrels of oil per day in the region. The company said that's twice the rate from three years ago and comes in large part from the Melehia development west of Alexandria, which is producing about 54,000 bpd.

More details:

http://www.upi.com/Business_News/Energy-Resources/2015/04/20/Eni-brags-of-oil-production-in-Egypt/6151429530713/

- **Tainted Russian wheat resurfaces in Egypt**

The Russian wheat crisis resurfaced in Egypt on April 1, when 25,000 tons of it were discovered en route to being used in government-subsidized bread production. The tainted wheat — which contains toxic and cancerous elements and dead insects and cannot be consumed — was among the most dangerous issues that raised the ire of the Egyptian street under the regime of President Hosni Mubarak.

More details:

<http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2015/04/egypt-bread-subsidies-infected-wheat-russia.html#ixzz3Xvmqgaof>

- **Will hash be legalized in Egypt? Debate heats up**

Heated debate has ensued since the Cigarettes Dealers Association submitted an official request to legalize hash. Fierce criticism of Osama Salama, chairman of the association and sponsor of the campaign, is paralleled with strong support for the initiative.

More details:

<http://english.alarabiya.net/en/perspective/analysis/2015/04/20/Will-hash-be-legalized-in-Egypt-Debate-heats-up.html>

- **Latest developments in Middle East remind Washington of Egypt's key role**

S Central Intelligence Agency director John Brennan held talks with Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi during an unannounced visit to Cairo, the president's office said. The Sunday evening meeting came amid a quickening rapprochement between the longtime allies after Washington in March lifted a partial freeze on its \$1.5 billion annual aid to Egypt that it imposed when then-army chief Sisi ousted elected president Mohamed Morsi in 2013.

More details:

<http://www.middle-east-online.com/english/?id=71013>

8. NORTH AFRICA

- **Bomb explodes at Spanish embassy in Libyan capital**

A bomb exploded in front of the Spanish embassy in the Libyan capital late on Monday, residents said, the latest in a string of attacks on foreign missions in the North African country. "We heard a loud explosion," said a Tripoli resident living next to the embassy.

More details:

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/04/20/us-libya-security-embassy-idUSKBN0NB2LF20150420>

- **France urges peace deal in Libya after killing of Christians**

French President Francois Hollande Monday condemned the killing of at least 28 Ethiopian Christians in Libya, urging a peace deal to restore order in the conflict-ridden nation. Hollande said in a statement he was outraged at the "abominable" murder shown in a video by ISIS released Sunday.

More details:

<http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Middle-East/2015/Apr-20/295079-france-urges-peace-deal-in-libya-after-killing-of-christians.ashx>

- **US condemns IS 'brutal murder' against Christians in Libya**

The United States on Sunday condemned the "brutal mass murder" of 30 Ethiopian Christians in Libya following a video released by Islamic State militants purportedly showing their execution. The 29-minute IS video appears to show militants holding two groups of captives, described in text captions as "followers of the cross from the enemy Ethiopian Church".

More details:

<http://www.middle-east-online.com/english/?id=71004>

- **Italy considers 'targeted interventions' against people smugglers in Libya**

Italy is studying the possibility of mounting "targeted interventions" against Libya-based people smugglers behind a huge surge in the numbers of migrants crossing the Mediterranean, Prime Minister Matteo Renzi said Monday.

More details:

<http://www.middle-east-online.com/english/?id=71014>

- **Obama, Tunisia's Essebsi to meet in wake of attack, elections**

U.S President Barack Obama and Tunisian President Beji Caid Essebsi will meet in Washington next month to discuss security and economic issues, including the situation in neighboring Libya, the White House said in a statement on Monday. Obama and Essebsi will "discuss regional developments, including events in Libya and terrorist threats in the region," at their May 21 White House meeting, the statement said, adding that U.S.-Tunisian security cooperation also was on the agenda.

More details:

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/04/20/us-usa-tunisia-idUSKBN0NB1DU20150420>

- **Tunisian transition a model for the region and beyond – Zeid**

At the end of a brief visit to Tunisia on Monday, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein applauded the resolve of the Tunisian people to stand firmly behind the human rights aspirations that sparked the 2011 transition in the country – in spite of many challenges and potential roadblocks.

More details:

<http://en.starafrica.com/news/tunisian-transition-a-model-for-the-region-and-beyond-zeid-2.html>

- **Algeria: after 70 years, France pays homage to Setif victims**

In Algeria's collective memory, the city of Setif (300 km from the capital) has a very important place as it was there that, for the first time, the French - who actually considered Algeria as part of France itself - behaved as occupiers, cracking down with unprecedented violence on a revolt that turned into an insurrection.

More details:

http://www.ansamed.info/ansamed/en/news/sections/politics/2015/04/20/algeria-after-70-years-france-pays-homage-to-setif-victims_957da452-7884-49e2-8f06-87f7e6f358c3.html

- **More Gas Found in Algeria Region Hit by 2013 Hostage-Taking**

Spanish oil company Repsol has found more gas in southeastern Algeria, a region made infamous by a 2013 attack on a gas complex by al-Qaida-linked militants. Repsol's consortium, which included Enel, GDF-Suez and Algerian state oil company Sonatrach, said Monday they found gas at 1,307 meters with a flow rate of 175,000 cubic meters per day in the southeast Illizi block.

More details:

<http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/gas-found-algeria-region-hit-2013-al-qaida-30439515>

- **Embezzlement of Humanitarian Aid in Tindouf: High Time the UNSC Acted**

The Permanent Representative of Morocco to the United Nations, Omar Hilale, sent a letter last Monday to the Security Council in which he called on the council members to coerce Algeria into respecting its international obligations with regards to the protection of refugees. Omar Hilale stressed that the report confirms “with supporting evidence the fraudulent, systematic, large-scale embezzlement of humanitarian aid destined for these camps, and the proven responsibility of Algeria and the Polisario in this regard.”

More details:

<http://www.moroccoworldnews.com/2015/04/156639/embezzlement-humanitarian-aid-tindouf-high-time-unscc-acted/>

- **We Won’t Soften Morocco’s Penal Code on Illicit Sexual Relationships: Minister**

Morocco’s Minister of Justice and Liberties, Mustapha Ramid, said today that he will not entertain any modifications to the new Penal Code draft law’s articles concerning the criminalization of illicit sexual relations, or concerning breaking the fast in public during the month of Ramadan. In a presentation regarding Morocco’s new Penal Code draft law at a national symposium addressing developments in the Penal Code draft law organized by his ministry in Rabat on Monday, Minister Ramid stressed that he would not respond to proposals that affect the core of the community and the faith of the state, as led by Commander of the Faithful.

More details:

<http://www.moroccoworldnews.com/2015/04/156603/wont-soften-moroccos-penal-code-illicit-sexual-relationships-minister/>

9. AFGHANISTAN – PAKISTAN

- **‘Afghan Farmers Receive New Agricultural Machineries’**

“Afghan Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL) introduced a new cultivation machinery to farmers in Bamyan that cultivate more potatoes in shortest possible time. This comes as potato yield is considerably declining in the province due to influx of Pakistani and Iranian imports. Bamyan’s potatoes are known in the region for their unique taste, but they fail to compete with the cheaper potatoes that flood Afghan market from Iran and Pakistan. As a result, farmers in Bamyan

are discouraged to grow potatoes on their lands. Costing USD 1000, the new machine will replace the manual works of the farmers and encourage farmers to grow more potatoes.”

More Details:

<http://www.bakhtarnews.com.af/eng/business/item/17081-afghan-farmers-receive-new-agricultural-machineries.html>

- **‘16 new ministers took oath’**

“16 new ministers to the cabinet of National Unity Government who received a vote of confidence from the parliament on Saturday took oath today. The oath was given to them by President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani in presidential palace in Kabul. Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Abdullah Abdullah and other high ranking government officials also took part in the ceremony. President Ghani told his new cabinet members not to accept private meetings. “Do not accept those bringing paper flowers”, he said. The following 16 new ministers will soon be officially introduced to their staff at their respective offices.”

More Details:

<http://www.khaama.com/16-new-ministers-took-oath-3210>

- **‘Government has spent \$6 million so far to secure release of Hazara abductees’**

“After vast condemnations and protests against government for not taking actions to secure the release of civilians abducted in southern Zabul province, President Ghani made it clear on Monday that government is not relaxing and it is strictly working on the issue. President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani during his two days official visit to Iran told Afghan students that government so far has spent \$6 million on the operations and efforts being made for releasing the abductees from the kidnappers. President Ghan said that the operations conducted for these abductees were the biggest ever operations of security forces in past 14 years. He added that 69 terrorists were killed during these operations but second Vice-President Mohammad Sarwar Danish had earlier said that over 100 members of the group responsible for the kidnapping were killed in the operation. The 31 passengers were abducted on Kabul-Kandahar highway from the jurisdiction of Shah Joy District in southern Zabul province about two months before.”

More Details:

<http://www.khaama.com/government-has-spent-6-million-so-far-to-reach-out-to-hazara-abductees-3202>

- **‘6 would-be suicide bombers held in Jalalabad’**

“At least six would-be suicide bombers and organizers were arrested in eastern Nangarhar province on Tuesday, the spy service said. According to a statement from the National Directorate of Security (NDS), the six-member group was detained in Ghani Khail district of the province. Qari Rahmatullah known as Qari Usman who was the ringleader of the group along with five others detained during a special operation in 27-Weyali area of the district. The arrested men included Abdul Bari, Sher Afzal, Shamshad, Samar Gul and Mirwais who were planning to carry out suicide attacks in the province. Suicide vests, Afghan National Army (ANA) soldier uniforms and explosives were also seized from the detainees, the statement added. The rebels have arrested after a suicide attack in Jalalabad city, the capital of Nangarhar, left 35 people dead and 125 others wounded last Saturday.”

More Details:

<http://www.pajhwok.com/en/2015/04/21/6-would-be-suicide-bombers-held-jalalabad>

- **‘Deputy To CE Calls For Continued Support Of USAID To Afghanistan’**

“The first deputy to chief executive, Engineer Mohammad Khan in meeting with the head of USAID here yesterday, besides thanking the body for its contribution to Afghanistan in the sectors of education, health, women rights, etc. called for its continued support, BNA reported. Afghanistan, he said is an agricultural country with having bulk water resources, while its people suffering from poverty. For his part, the USAID chief assured that the entity’s assistance with Afghanistan would continue like past years and offering scholarships to Afghan students would be resumed within the next two months.”

More Details:

<http://www.bakhtarnews.com.af/eng/politics/item/17076-deputy-to-ce-calls-for-continued-support-of-usaid-to-afghanistan.html>

- **‘Record number of 17 death row prisoners hanged’**

“A record number of 17 death row convicts were sent to the gallows in different jails of Pakistan on early Tuesday morning. Of them, three death row prisoners were hanged in Faisalabad. Death sentence prisoner Nizam Din had killed a man in 1998 while Muhammad Hussain was guilty of killing his opponent. Another prisoner Muhammad Azam was guilty of killing seven members of his in-laws family. Three prisoners were hanged in Rawalpindi’s Adiyala Jail on Tuesday. Executed death row prisoners were identified as Raja Raees, Shakeel and Sarfaraz. Three more death row prisoners were executed in Gujranawala. Death sentence prisoner Anayat Ullah was guilty of killing seven members of the same family in 2002 over a land dispute. Prisoners Zafar Iqbal and Latif were guilty of killing four persons, including a woman, in 1995. Two death row convicts, Ghulam Nabi and Allah Rakha were hanged in Lahore. Ghulam Nabi, resident of Sabzazar was guilty of killing a man in Muzand area of Lahore while Allah Rakha of Kassur had killed a man in Mustafabad area.”

More Details:

<http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/national/21-Apr-2015/record-number-of-17-death-row-prisoners-hanged>

- **‘Security fears for China-Pakistan corridor as Xi ends visit’**

“Chinese President Xi Jinping said Tuesday a US\$46 billion economic corridor offered Pakistan a "historic development opportunity", but security fears linger over the project which involves major construction in some highly unstable areas. Pakistani and Chinese officials on Monday signed a series of more than 50 accords to inaugurate the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, which will create a network of roads, railways and pipelines linking China's restive west to the Arabian Sea through Pakistan. The project is part of Beijing's "Belt and Road" plan to expand its trade and transport footprint across Central and South Asia. It will give China easier access to Middle Eastern oil via the deepwater port of Gwadar in southwest Pakistan.”

More Details:

<http://www.straitstimes.com/news/asia/east-asia/story/security-fears-china-pakistan-corridor-xi-ends-visit-20150421>

- **‘Pak and China launched a energy and infrastructure projects \$46 billion’**

“China and Pakistan launched a plan on Monday 20, April, 2015 for energy and infrastructure projects in Pakistan worth \$46 billion, linking their economies and underscoring China’s economic ambitions in Asia and beyond. China’s President Xi Jinping arrived in Islamabad to oversee the signing of agreements aimed at establishing a China-Pakistan Economic Corridor between Gwadar port on the Arabian Sea and China’s western Xinjiang region. The plan, which would eclipse US spending in Pakistan over the last decade or so, is part of China’s aim to forge ‘Silk Road’ land and sea ties to markets in the Middle East and Europe. Xi, whose visit to Pakistan winds up on Tuesday 21, April, 2015, said it cemented an ‘all-weather strategic cooperative partnership’ between the neighbours. Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif said the corridor would transform Pakistan into a regional hub and give China a shorter and cheaper route for trade with much of Asia, the Middle East and Africa. “Friendship with China is the cornerstone of Pakistan’s foreign policy,” Nawaz said in a speech. Xi linked the economic cooperation with security. “Our cooperation in the security and economic fields reinforce each other, and they must be advanced simultaneously,” he said. Nawaz added, “I assured President Xi that Pakistan considers China’s security as important as its own security.” Xi called for greater efforts to bring peace to Afghanistan, where Pakistan is keen to restrict the influence of its rival India.”

More Details:

<http://paktribune.com/news/Pak-and-China-launched-a-energy-and-infrastructure-projects-46-billion-273583.html>

10.TURKEY AND THE MIDDLE EAST

- **Turkey, Arab states agree to boost economic ties**

Arab and Turkish ministers of trade, economy and investment agreed Monday on the need to expedite implementation of programs aimed at deepening commercial exchanges and economic cooperation between the two sides. The ministers agreed on the need to form a specialized joint workgroup tasked with exploring investment opportunities and streamlining investment procedures, the ministers said in a joint statement.

More Details:

<http://www.worldbulletin.net/turkey/158130/turkey-arab-states-agree-to-boost-economic-ties>

- **Turkey detains UK family suspected of joining Daesh**

A couple and their four children from England, who were allegedly trying to cross into Syria to join Daesh, have been detained in Ankara, police officials have said. The family, who had entered Turkey via land from Greece on April 16, was detained in a hotel on Monday by Ankara police in the industrial neighborhood of Ostim. UK authorities had informed their Turkish counterparts on April 19 that Asif Malik, 33, his wife Sara Malik, 29, and their four children aged from one to seven years old, had entered Turkey and could be headed to Syria to join Daesh.

More Details:

<http://www.aa.com.tr/en/turkey/496983--turkey-detains-uk-family-suspected-of-joining-daesh>

- **Turkey condemns 'hateful' Daesh killings in Libya**

Turkey on Monday condemned the apparent execution of two groups of Ethiopian Christians in Libya by groups linked to Daesh. In a statement, the Foreign Ministry said: "This hateful terrorist incident showed one more time the importance of filling the current authority gap in Libya with a government of national unity, which should be built with consensus." The ministry stressed the importance of UN-backed talks in combating terrorism in the country, which has been riven by violence since the fall of Muammar Gaddafi in late 2011.

More Details:

<http://www.aa.com.tr/en/turkey/496648--turkey-condemns-hateful-daesh-killings-in-libya>

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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