



MIDDLE EAST DAILY BULLETIN

GÜNLÜK ORTADOĞU BÜLTENİ

Domestic Policy in the Middle East Countries

Bölge Ülkelerinde İç Siyaset

The Restructuring Proces of Iraq

Irak'ın Yeniden Yapılanma Süreci

Energy Security

Enerji Güvenliği

Economy News

Ekonomi Haberleri

Peace Process

Barış Süreci

Ethnic and Secterian Groups

Etnik ve Mezhepsel Gruplar

Non State Actors

Devlet-dışı Aktörler

Relations with the West

Batı'yla İlişkiler

MIDDLE EAST DAILY BULLETIN

23 JUNE 2017

NO: 2393

1. IRAQ.....	4
• Two killed, four wounded in bomb blast, west of Baghdad.....	4
• Masrour Barzani Meets with Top EU Delegation in Erbil	4
• ISIS crimes against Iraqi antiquities similar to those of Tatars.....	4
• Iraqi forces patrol close to the destroyed Al-Nuri Mosque of Mosul	4
• Judge blocks deportation of more than 100 Iraqi Christians	5
• Barzani says alternative of referendum is war	5
• Mosul 'liberation' in a few days: Iraqi PM.....	5
• Teenagers Blown-up by Old Landmine; 46 Killed in Iraq.....	5
• Iraqi PM: Iran seriously harmed by terrorism	5
• Over 5M children need humanitarian aid in Iraq: UNICEF	6
• Islamic parties intimidate, fear atheists in Iraq	6
• When the Battle for Mosul Ends, the Fight for Iraq Begins	6
• Kurdish Referendum: What Mullah Mustafa Might Do	6
• Soldier risks life to save girl amid gunfire in Mosul.....	7
• Iraqi Kurdish Leaders Tell Iran's Leaders to 'Mind Their Business' in Independence Vote.....	7
• Iraq's oil exports in June near May level, oil minister says	7
• Iraqi PM Haider al-Abadi says total liberation of Mosul will be announced in 'a few days'	7
• UNESCO chief deplores iconic mosque's destruction in Iraq's Mosul	8
• Mosul makeshift courts try to bring justice	8
• Iraq Tries to Avoid Taking Sides in Persian Gulf Diplomatic Crisis	8
2. SYRIA.....	8
• The DoD Just Dropped New Details On The Shootdown Of A Syrian Warplane By A US F/A-18E8	
• U.S. Sends Civilian Team to Syria to Help the Displaced Return Home	9
• Clashes continue in Daraa city with targeting by the regime forces.....	9
• Multinational forces could patrol Syria 'de-escalation zones': Turkey	9
• Russian missiles target Daesh in Syria's Hama province	9
• Kazakhstan doesn't negotiate on sending troops to Syria — Foreign Minister	10
• Syrian Opposition Upset with Macron's 'Contradictory and Unbalanced' Statements on Assad	10
• Syrian Army will not halt operations in west Raqqa despite US interference	10
• Raqqa: The desperate fight for Islamic State group's 'capital'	10
3. IRAN	11
• Iran ready to help Syria reconstruction: Envoy	11
• Iran calls on Riyadh to free Saudi-detained 'fishermen'	11
• Saudi Arabia demands Qatar shut down Al-Jazeera, cut ties with Iran	11
• Iran supplies 1,000+ tons of food to Qatar every day – media	12
• Iran holds annual anti-Israel rallies, displays missiles	12
• Iran's Khamenei: 'there is no doubt' we'll witness Israel's demise	12
• IRGC Smashes Terrorist Team West of Iran	12
• Quds Day rallies start in Iran	13

• Iran's Southwestern Province Experiencing Water/Electricity Outages	13
4. ISRAEL – PALESTINE.....	13
• Tense Meeting between Abbas, Trump's Envoys	13
• Gaza's power station running again	14
• Is an 'Economic Separation Barrier' the Key to the Future of Israel-Palestine?	14
• Rafah Crossing Still Closed after 100 Days	14
• Lieberman: Abbas seeks to start new Israeli-Hamas war	14
• Israel's new 'security strategy' at Damascus Gate to further control Palestinian movement..	15
• Israel boycott restrictions thrown out by UK's High Court	15
• Hamas leader urges Arab states to promote support for Palestine	15
• Hamas goes to Cairo	16
• US drops \$900m lawsuit against PA over Israel attacks.....	16
5. JORDAN and LEBANON.....	16
• China, Jordan keen to boost cooperation	16
• Jordan receives \$71m from IMF.....	17
• Hariri Meets Geagea over Suhoor, Stresses Necessity to Address Livelihood Issues	17
• Israel accuses Hezbollah of 'dangerous provocation'	17
• UN Secretary-General Appoints Ex-Lebanese Minister to Head Mission in Libya	17
• Israel's Next War on Lebanon Will Kill Civilians, Air Force Commander Says	17
• Top leaders agree to implement key Taif Accord provisions	18
• Loyalty to Resistance: New Election Law Qualitative Step toward Correcting Representation	18
• IDF officer says Lebanese army co-operating with Hizbullah.....	18
• Syrian Army, Hezbollah Foil Al-Qaeda's Border Infiltration	18
6. ARABIAN PENINSULA AND THE GULF OF BASRA.....	19
• Saudi Arabia, UAE, Egypt and Bahrain send list of 13 demands to Qatar	19
• Investigation Shows Torture Conducted by UAE in 'Black Sites' in Yemen.....	19
• Al-Qaeda leader killed in Yemen	19
• UAE accused of backing secret network of prisons in Yemen.....	19
• UN's Sana'a office slams Saudi strikes on civilians.....	20
• Saudi Arabia gives Qatar 10 days to meet its demands: close Al-Jazeera and cut ties with Iran	20
• Israel Deployed 18 Fighter Jets To Saudi Arabia To "Prevent A Coup": Fars.....	20
• UAE-France anti-terror alliance a crucial move.....	20
• Kuwait, Oman, and the Qatar Crisis	21
7. EGYPT.....	21
• Egypt extends emergency state by 3 months	21
• Egypt Expands Media Crackdown; Rights Groups Lament Plight of Press	21
• Egypt's police kill 7 involved in violence against Christians	21
• Rafah Crossing Still Closed after 100 Days	22
• President Sisi explains Egypt's stand on Nile Basin	22
• Al Jazeera Sued for Endangering Reporters, Supporting Muslim Brotherhood in 2013 Egyptian Revolution	22
• Egypt president ratifies capital gains tax freeze extension, approves stamp duty	22
• Egypt Says 7 Militants Killed In Raid on Desert Camp	23
• Five foreign firms win \$750 mln seismic contracts in Egypt's Red Sea	23

• Egypt court ruling revives row over ergot fungus in wheat imports.....	23
8. NORTH AFRICA.....	23
• Moroccans Voice Solidarity with Al-Rif Protesters.....	23
• Morocco Protest Leader 'Beaten' During Arrest — NGOs	24
• Morocco Finalizes Entry into BDEAC Capital	24
• Mitsubishi, Sumitomo Seal Tunisia Power Project Deal.....	24
• Caïd Essebsi Meets Nigeria's Minister of Foreign Affairs	24
• Protesters Close Oil Pump in Southern Tunisia	25
• Libyan Money in UAE could End up in Saif Gaddafi's Hands, Report.....	25
• Plan on Libyan border to include African accords – Alfano	25
• LNA Closes Down a Benghazi Local Defence Militia	25
• How to Root Out ISIS from Libya	26
9. AFGHANISTAN – PAKISTAN	26
• Mine attack kills six police officers in Afghanistan's Helmand.....	26
• Afghanistan's Delayed Elections Set For One Year's Time	26
• Blast kills 9, injures several in Pakistan's Quetta.....	26
• Terror alert sounded in Punjab border regions.....	27
• Islamabad slams US drone attacks in Pakistan.....	27
• Pakistan tightens business visa procedures for Chinese nationals after alleged Islamic State killings.....	27
• Pakistan, China working closely for Afghanistan peace: FO.....	27
• 'Pakistan, Australia should develop sustainable partnership'	28
• Removal of barricades starts in Kabul city today: officials.....	28
10. TURKEY AND THE MIDDLE EAST.....	28
• Turkey, Iran boost Qatar support amid Saudi Arabia blockade	28
• Turkish aid agency builds Afghan orphanage.....	28

1. IRAQ

- **Two killed, four wounded in bomb blast, west of Baghdad**

A blast occurred on Thursday at one of the main exits between the capital city of Baghdad and Anbar province, a police source said. Speaking to Shafaq News, the source said two persons were killed, while four others were wounded as a booby-trapped vehicle exploded in west of Baghdad.

More Details

<http://www.iraqinews.com/iraq-war/two-killed-four-wounded-bomb-blast-west-baghdad/>

- **Masrour Barzani Meets with Top EU Delegation in Erbil**

Chancellor of Kurdistan Region Security Council (KRSC) Masrour Barzani met with a top European Union (EU) delegation headed by Patrick Simmonet, the European Union Ambassador to Iraq. The EU delegation consisted of a number of European countries' envoys.

More Details

<http://www.basnews.com/index.php/en/news/kurdistan/359613>

- **ISIS crimes against Iraqi antiquities similar to those of Tatars**

ISIS terror group's destruction of Arab and Islamic monuments is similar to the devastation created by the Tatars. On Wednesday, ISIS terrorists destroyed The Great Nouri Mosque and its al-Hadba Minaret in Mosul. The 55 m high minaret is one of the most famous Islamic monuments in Mosul.

More Details

<http://www.thebaghdadpost.com/en/story/13446/ISIS-crimes-against-Iraqi-antiquities-similar-to-those-of-Tatars>

- **Iraqi forces patrol close to the destroyed Al-Nuri Mosque of Mosul**

An Iraqi army humvee patrolled al-Agidat neighbourhood of Mosul, Thursday, a few hundred metres from the rubble of the Great Mosque of al-Nuri that was reportedly destroyed by the so-called Islamic State (IS, formerly ISIS/ISIL) on Wednesday.

More Details

<https://www.almasdarnews.com/article/iraqi-forces-patrol-close-destroyed-al-nuri-mosque-mosul/>

- **Judge blocks deportation of more than 100 Iraqi Christians**

A judge on Thursday temporarily halted the deportation of more than 100 Iraqi Christians living in the Detroit area who fear torture and possible death if sent back to Iraq.

More Details

<http://nypost.com/2017/06/23/judge-blocks-deportation-of-more-than-100-iraqi-christians/>

- **Barzani says alternative of referendum is war**

The president of the Iraq's Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) Masoud Barzani has declared that the Sept. 25 independence referendum cannot be scrapped or delayed and any action to halt it will make a bloodbath in the region.

More Details

<https://www.dailysabah.com/columns/ilnur-cevik/2017/06/23/barzani-says-alternative-of-referendum-is-war>

- **Mosul 'liberation' in a few days: Iraqi PM**

The "liberation" of the city of Mosul from Daesh will be announced in a few days, Iraqi Prime Minister Haider Al-Abadi said on Thursday, according to Baghdad-based Al-Sumaria TV.

More Details

<http://www.arabnews.com/node/1119261/middle-east>

- **Teenagers Blown-up by Old Landmine; 46 Killed in Iraq**

Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi described the destruction of the Great Mosque of al-Nuri and its famous minaret as admission by the Islamic State militants that they have lost but promised to rebuild it. He also predicted that Mosul's liberation will come within days. Residents expressed sorrow, anger, and shock at the loss of one of Mosul's most defining landmarks.

More Details

<http://original.antiwar.com/updates/2017/06/22/teenagers-blown-old-landmine-46-killed-iraqi/>

- **Iraqi PM: Iran seriously harmed by terrorism**

Iraqi Prime Minister Haider Al-Abadi said on Thursday that since Iran has a deep understanding about terrorism since it has seriously been damaged by the evil phenomenon.

More Details

<http://www.irna.ir/en/News/82574550/>

- **Over 5M children need humanitarian aid in Iraq: UNICEF**

The UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) reported on Thursday that more than 5 million children need urgent humanitarian assistance in Iraq as intensified fighting continued. A new report released by UNICEF also said that 1,075 children have been killed and more than 1,100 children have been maimed and injured since 2014.

More Details

http://www.china.org.cn/world/2017-06/23/content_41083093.htm

- **Islamic parties intimidate, fear atheists in Iraq**

Iraq's Islamic movements and political parties have intensified their rhetoric in recent weeks against atheism, warning Iraqis about its spread and the need to confront atheists. Such movements and parties worry that public sentiment is turning against Islamic parties in politics and that this could be reflected in upcoming elections, scheduled for the end of 2017 and beginning of 2018.

More Details

<http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2017/06/iraq-atheism-political-islam-human-rights.html>

- **When the Battle for Mosul Ends, the Fight for Iraq Begins**

Iraq is at a crucial crossroads. The Iraqi government, backed by the United States and its coalition partners, is on the brink of retaking all major urban territories once occupied by ISIS

More Details

<http://nationalinterest.org/feature/when-the-battle-mosul-ends-the-fight-iraq-begins-21277>

- **Kurdish Referendum: What Mullah Mustafa Might Do**

No matter how you look at it the campaign to liberate Mosul and wipe out ISIS, regarded by many as an enemy of humanity, would top the list. Next to it might be the formation of a new national government cutting across sectarian barriers and offering Iraqis a hope for the future. The list could also include the need to stop corruption from developing into a way of life rather than an affliction in certain segments of the government.

More Details

<https://english.aawsat.com/amir-taheri/opinion/kurdish-referendum-mullah-mustafa-might>

- **Soldier risks life to save girl amid gunfire in Mosul**

Aid worker David Eubank, a former Green Beret, was in the war-torn northern Iraqi city of Mosul when he spotted the stranded girl moving among the bodies of civilians who had been shot by a sniper.

More Details

<http://www.wyff4.com/article/soldier-risks-life-to-save-girl-amid-gunfire-in-mosul/10209946>

- **Iraqi Kurdish Leaders Tell Iran's Leaders to 'Mind Their Business' in Independence Vote**

Kurdish officials are hitting back against Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, who has expressed "strong opposition" to a September referendum on establishing an independent Kurdistan in what is now Iraq

More Details

<http://www.breitbart.com/national-security/2017/06/22/iraqi-kurdish-leaders-tell-irans-leaders-mind-their-business-independence-vote/>

- **Iraq's oil exports in June near May level, oil minister says**

Iraq's oil exports from fields owned by the central government in Baghdad are at around 3.27 million barrels per day (bpd) so far in June, about the same level as in May, Oil Minister Jabar al-Luaibi said on Thursday.

More Details

<http://uk.reuters.com/article/us-iraq-oil-energy-idUKKBN19D2BD>

- **Iraqi PM Haider al-Abadi says total liberation of Mosul will be announced in 'a few days'**

Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi on Thursday (22 June) said that the complete liberation of Mosul from Isis would be announced soon. "It's a matter of a few days and we will announce the total liberation of Mosul," the PM was reportedly quoted as saying by local news channel reporters.

More Details

<http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/iraqi-pm-haider-al-abadi-says-total-liberation-mosul-will-be-announced-few-days-1627479>

- **UNESCO chief deplores iconic mosque's destruction in Iraq's Mosul**

The head of the United Nations cultural agency has deplored the destruction of historic religious architecture in Iraq's Mosul city by ISIL/Da'esh fighters.

More Details

<http://www.app.com.pk/unesco-chief-deplores-iconic-mosques-destruction-in-iraqs-mosul/>

- **Mosul makeshift courts try to bring justice**

As IS forces retreat, fear is giving way to anger. Iraqis who have lost their homes and loved ones want those responsible to be held to account. The Iraqi government has set up makeshift courts to try anyone accused of fighting for the terrorist group - and there are thousands of cases to deal with.

More Details

<http://www.dw.com/en/mosul-makeshift-courts-try-to-bring-justice/av-39378522>

- **Iraq Tries to Avoid Taking Sides in Persian Gulf Diplomatic Crisis**

As tensions remain high in the Persian Gulf region amid the Qatari diplomatic row, it appears that Iraq seeks to maintain a neutral stance in this situation rather than to act as a mediator.

More Details

<https://sputniknews.com/middleeast/201706221054884203-iraq-qatar-crisis-relations/>

2. SYRIA

- **The DoD Just Dropped New Details On The Shootdown Of A Syrian Warplane By A US F/A-18E**

New details have emerged from the downing of a Russian-made Su-22 by a U.S. F/A-18E Super Hornet over Syria. The Pentagon said that after Syrian jets had bombed U.S.-backed forces fighting ISIS in Syria and ground forces headed their way with artillery and armored vehicles, U.S. jets made a strafing run at the vehicles to stop their advance.

More Details:

<http://taskandpurpose.com/us-syria-shootdown-details/>

- **U.S. Sends Civilian Team to Syria to Help the Displaced Return Home**

The Trump administration is sending a civilian team into Syria to try to bring stability to areas that American-backed forces have retaken from the Islamic State and to avert a humanitarian crisis, according to United States officials.

More Details:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/06/22/us/politics/syria-trump-civilian-humanitarians.html>

- **Clashes continue in Daraa city with targeting by the regime forces**

Violent clashes are still taking place between the regime forces and militiamen loyal to them against the rebel and Islamic factions in the eastern area of Daraa camp in Daraa city, and information about human losses in the ranks of both parties, amid the targeting carried out by the Islamic faction on positions of the regime forces in the area, causing human losses in the rank of the regime forces.

More Details:

<http://www.syriahr.com/en/?p=68626>

- **Multinational forces could patrol Syria 'de-escalation zones': Turkey**

Turkey on Thursday said multinational forces from differing sides in the Syria conflict could be deployed to ensure peace in so-called "de-escalation" zones aimed at ending the civil war. Iran, Russia and Turkey agreed an accord on May 4 at peace talks in the Kazakh capital Astana that would see four de-escalation regions set up across Syria.

More Details:

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/wires/afp/article-4629948/Multinational-forces-patrol-Syria-escalation-zones-Turkey.html>

- **Russian missiles target Daesh in Syria's Hama province**

Russia's defense ministry on Friday said its forces launched cruise missiles from the eastern Mediterranean against Daesh targets in Syria's west-central Hama province. Six Kalibr cruise missiles were launched from the Admiral Essen frigate, the Admiral Grigorovich and from Russia's Krasnodar submarine, destroying Daesh command posts and ammunition depots in the town of Akerbat, the ministry said but did not give information on the date of the strikes.

More Details:

<http://www.yenisafak.com/en/world/russian-missiles-target-daesh-in-syrias-hama-province-2738618>

- **Kazakhstan doesn't negotiate on sending troops to Syria — Foreign Minister**

Foreign Minister of Kazakhstan Kairat Abdrakhmanov said that Kazakhstan is not in talks with anybody on sending its troops to Syria, local media report. The information about the talks of Russia with Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan on sending troops to Syria has been reported today in Russian media.

More Details:

<http://akipress.com/news:593994/>

- **Syrian Opposition Upset with Macron's 'Contradictory and Unbalanced' Statements on Assad**

The Syrian opposition, with its political and military wings, has expressed its disappointment with the statements of French President Emmanuel Macron on regime chief Bashar Assad, saying that they go against the country's policy on the Syrian crisis. His remarks are "unbalanced and reflect great contradictions," it said. Macron had declared that the ouster of Assad is "not a precondition if there is no legitimate alternative for him."

More Details:

<https://english.aawsat.com/michel-abou-najm-and-youssef-diab/news-middle-east/syrian-opposition-upset-macrons-contradictory-unbalanced-statements-assad>

- **Syrian Army will not halt operations in west Raqqa despite US interference**

The Syrian Arab Army (SAA) will not halt their operations in the western countryside of the Al-Raqqa Governorate, despite the U.S.' recent attacks on their air force near the key town of Resafa. "America's aggression will not stop our mission and we (Syrian Army) will keep fighting terrorists as long as they are in Syria," a military officer told Al-Masdar on Thursday night.

More Details:

<https://www.almasdarnews.com/article/syrian-army-will-not-halt-operations-west-raqqa-despite-us-interference/>

- **Raqqa: The desperate fight for Islamic State group's 'capital'**

So-called Islamic State is defending its Syrian "capital" against a major offensive by the US-backed Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), an alliance of Kurdish and Arab fighters. The BBC's Gabriel Gatehouse is one of the first reporters to reach the city. This has been a long and brutal road. Driving through the suburbs of Raqqa towards the centre, we pass collapsed buildings, hit by American air strikes, and pockmarked shop fronts, caught between the advance of the SDF and the retreating fighters who call themselves Islamic State (IS).

More Details:

<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-40374094>

3. IRAN

- **Iran ready to help Syria reconstruction: Envoy**

Iran's Ambassador to Syria Javad Torkabadi in a meeting on Thursday with the Syrian Minister of Housing Hussein Arnus voiced Iran's readiness to help Syria reconstruction in the post-Daesh era. 'Many companies in Iran are ready to help Syria in the housing and reconstruction fields rendering their best services now that victory is in sight in Syria after a protracted battle,' said the ambassador.

More Details:

<http://www.irna.ir/en/News/82574593/>

- **Iran calls on Riyadh to free Saudi-detained 'fishermen'**

Iran has urged regional rival Saudi Arabia to free three Iranian fishermen, pay compensation for shooting dead a sailor and punish those behind an "irresponsible act", Fars news agency reported on Thursday. Iranian media reported last week that Saudi border guards had opened fire on Iranian fishing boats in the Gulf, killing a fisherman.

More Details:

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/06/iran-calls-riyadh-free-saudi-detained-fishermen-170622132409747.html>

- **Saudi Arabia demands Qatar shut down Al-Jazeera, cut ties with Iran**

Saudi Arabia and several other Arab nations have demanded that Qatar shutter the broadcasting network Al-Jazeera, cut diplomatic ties with Iran, and close Turkey's air base in the country, the Associated Press reported Thursday night. The list of demands was released by Kuwait, which is helping mediate the dispute. The list demanded that Qatar end all military cooperation with Turkey as well as an unspecified sum of money.

More Details:

<http://thehill.com/homenews/news/339111-saudi-arabia-demands-qatar-shut-down-al-jazeera-cut-ties-with-iran>

- **Iran supplies 1,000+ tons of food to Qatar every day – media**

Iran is sending 1,100 tons of fruit and vegetables to Qatar on a daily basis as the country endures a blockade by Saudi Arabia and other Gulf nations. Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, the UAE, Egypt and other countries cut diplomatic ties and transportation links with Qatar early in June.

More Details:

<https://www.rt.com/news/393644-iran-qatar-food-supply-blockade/>

- **Iran holds annual anti-Israel rallies, displays missiles**

Iran is holding anti-Israel rallies across the country, with protesters condemning Israel's occupation of Palestinian territories and chanting "Death to Israel." Marchers in Tehran are heading from various points of the city toward the Friday prayer ceremony at Tehran University. State media say similar demonstrations are underway in other cities and towns in Iran.

More Details:

https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle_east/iranians-hold-annual-anti-israel-rallies-displays-missile/2017/06/23/6f66d940-57e3-11e7-840b-512026319da7_story.html?utm_term=.f022cc6a4099

- **Iran's Khamenei: 'there is no doubt' we'll witness Israel's demise**

Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei has lashed out at Israel in a deluge of rhetoric against the Jewish state ahead of the Iranian-initiated 'Al Quds day,' which protests Israel's existence. "There is no doubt that we will witness the demise of the Zionist entity [Israel]," read a post on his Twitter account Thursday.

More Details:

<http://www.jpost.com/Middle-East/Iran-News/Irans-Khamenei-There-is-no-doubt-we-witness-Israel's-demise-497623>

- **IRGC Smashes Terrorist Team West of Iran**

The Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) forces attacked a team of terrorists in Iran's Western province of Kurdistan on Friday morning, killing three and arresting one person. According to the public relations department of the IRGC's Hamze Sayyid al-Shohada Base, the IRGC ground troops in Kurdistan Province clashed with a team of terrorists affiliated with the global arrogance on Friday morning.

More Details:

<https://www.tasnimnews.com/en/news/2017/06/23/1444338/irgc-smashes-terrorist-team-west-of-iran>

- **Quds Day rallies start in Iran**

Iranian people started the Quds Day rallies, IRNA reported on June 23. "People in large groups of tens of thousands in Tehran in more than 800 cities started rallies in the morning, carrying placards and chanting slogans against Israel. Back in 1979, the last Friday of the holy month of Ramadan was designated by the late founder of the Islamic Republic, Ayatollah Khomeini, as Quds Day to mobilize Muslims worldwide in support of Palestinians and against Israel.

More Details:

<http://en.trend.az/iran/society/2769937.html>

- **Iran's Southwestern Province Experiencing Water/Electricity Outages**

Majeed Nosseri-Nezhad on Wednesday referred to continuous water and electricity outages in Khuzestan Province, southwest Iran, saying this has made the situation critical for the people. "People in the city of Shadegan have neither drinking water nor any water for agricultural purposes," he said while mentioning most cities are experiencing 50 degree C heat.

More Details:

<http://www.ncr-iran.org/en/news/society/23064-iran-s-southwestern-province-experiencing-water-electricity-outages>

4. ISRAEL – PALESTINE

- **Tense Meeting between Abbas, Trump's Envoys**

A meeting held on Thursday between Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas and US President's Advisors Jared Kushner and Jason Greenblatt was "tense and strained", well-informed Palestinian sources told Asharq Al-Awsat newspaper. The sources noted that the two US officials have focused, during their encounter with Abbas, on the need to end incitement and to cut the salaries of Palestinian "detainees and deceased", who had perpetrated attacks against Israelis, instead of tackling the principle of the two-state solution.

More Details:

<https://english.aawsat.com/kifah-ziboun/news-middle-east/tense-meeting-abbas-trumps-envoys>

- **Gaza's power station running again**

Gaza's sole power station is back up and working, the energy authority in the enclave said Thursday, after fuel supplies from Egypt helped to ease an energy crisis. The announcement came after Egypt delivered a million liters of fuel to the station on Wednesday, three days after Israel began cutting electricity supplies to Gaza at the request of Palestinian Authority (PA) chairman Mahmoud Abbas.

MoreDetails:

<http://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx/231463>

- **Is an 'Economic Separation Barrier' the Key to the Future of Israel-Palestine?**

Around six weeks ago, Finance Minister Moshe Kahlon announced an ambitious program aimed at lowering the expenses of millions of Israelis, particularly lower- and middle-income families. Kahlon and his aides presumably did not consider the plan's effect on several million people who are not Israeli. Reducing taxes and customs fees on clothes, shoes and mobile devices is also keenly relevant to the Palestinians living in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. It is therefore not surprising to learn that when Kahlon met recently with Palestinian Authority officials, as part of their regular contacts, the program was discussed.

More Details:

<http://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/business/1.797399>

- **Rafah Crossing Still Closed after 100 Days**

Rafah Crossing, the main artery for Palestinians in Gaza to travel out of the Strip, has been closed for 103 consecutive days, with no indication that it will reopen soon, Quds Press reported yesterday. The crossing's gates were last opened on 9 March when a few thousand people travelled through it. More than 30,000 Palestinians have registered to travel through the border, most are students, patients and those separated from their families.

More Details:

<http://imemc.org/article/rafah-crossing-still-closed-after-100-days/>

- **Lieberman: Abbas seeks to start new Israeli-Hamas war**

Israel's defence minister Avigdor Lieberman has accused Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas of trying to start a fresh conflict between Tel Aviv and the Palestinian movement Hamas through the Gaza electricity crisis.

Lieberman said on Thursday that Abbas, who is also the head of the secular Fatah movement that rules the occupied West Bank, was trying to increase tensions by cutting payments for electricity and other services in Gaza.

More Details:

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/06/lieberman-abbas-seeks-spark-israeli-hamas-war-170622175504038.html>

- **Israel's new 'security strategy' at Damascus Gate to further control Palestinian movement**

Israel's Channel 2 website reported on Thursday that top Israeli officials, including Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, approved a new "security strategy" to be implemented at the Damascus Gate entrance to the Old City of occupied East Jerusalem. According to Channel 2, Netanyahu met with Israeli Public Security minister Gilad Erdan, Chief of Israeli Police Roni Alsheikh, and Chief of Israeli Police in Jerusalem Yoram Halevy, on Wednesday, where Halevy suggested a new surveillance and armed security strategy at the Gate, which serves as the entrance to the Muslim quarter of the Old City.

More Details:

<http://www.maannews.com/Content.aspx?ID=777767>

- **Israel boycott restrictions thrown out by UK's High Court**

The High Court in London ruled on Thursday that the Conservative government acted unlawfully in trying to prevent local councils in the United Kingdom from divesting from firms involved in Israel's military occupation. The successful legal challenge for the right to boycott was brought by the Palestine Solidarity Campaign in March, and was supported by War on Want, the Campaign Against the Arms Trade and the Quakers.

More Details:

<https://electronicintifada.net/blogs/asa-winstanley/israel-boycott-restrictions-thrown-out-uks-high-court>

- **Hamas leader urges Arab states to promote support for Palestine**

The official thanked the late founder of Islamic Revolution Imam Khomeini for naming the last Friday of the holy month of Ramadan as the International Quds Day, noting that it is a day of reminding the Islamic and Arabic Ummah of their duty towards the Al-Aqsa Mosque, the first Qiblah (prayers' direction) of the world's Muslims.

More Details:

<http://www.irna.ir/en/News/82574739/>

- **Hamas goes to Cairo**

A Hamas delegation recently paid an official visit to Egypt, which these days is news in and of itself. While in Cairo, the delegation also met with the former Fatah warlord Muhammad Dahlan, which is even bigger news. The Hamas delegation was led by Yahya Sinwar. A leader of the Izz ad-Din al-Qassam Brigades, who served more than twenty years in Israeli jails until released in a prisoner exchange in 2011, Sinwar was elected four months ago to lead the movement in the occupied Gaza Strip, its main power base. In May, an election to choose a successor to the politburo chief Khalid Mashal was won by the former Palestinian Authority prime minister Ismail Haniya, a comparatively weak figure. Sinwar is the movement's de facto overall leader.

More Details:

<https://www.lrb.co.uk/blog/2017/06/22/mouin-rabbani/hamas-goes-to-cairo/>

- **US drops \$900m lawsuit against PA over Israel attacks**

The Federal Court in Washington has dropped a lawsuit filed four years ago against the Palestinian Authority and the PLO for damages suffered by American families in attacks perpetrated by Palestinians against Israeli targets. The plaintiffs demanded about \$900 million in damages. Palestinian Minister of Finance and Planning, Shukri Bishara, expressed his satisfaction with the decision saying the court's decision is the result of efforts made by the Palestinian Authority.

More Details:

<https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20170622-us-drops-900m-lawsuit-against-pa-over-israel-attacks/>

5. JORDAN and LEBANON

- **China, Jordan keen to boost cooperation**

Visiting Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi said on Thursday that China was keen to boost ties with Jordan in various areas. At a press conference in Amman with his Jordanian counterpart Ayman Safadi, the Chinese official said there is large room for more cooperation in areas of trade, economy and culture.

More details:

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-06/23/c_136387499.htm

- **Jordan receives \$71m from IMF**

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) said it had disbursed \$71 million to Jordan after its Executive Board completed its first review of the country's economy. In a statement issued today, the fund said that total payments to Jordan under an extended loan programme amounted to \$141.9 million.

More details:

<https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20170622-jordan-receives-71m-from-imf/>

- **Hariri Meets Geagea over Suhoor, Stresses Necessity to Address Livelihood Issues**

Prime Minister Saad Hariri held a meeting with Lebanese Forces leader Samir Geagea over a Suhoor invitation at the latter's residence in Maarab, the National News Agency reported on Friday.

More details:

<http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/231868-hariri-meets-geagea-over-suhoor-stresses-necessity-to-address-livelihood-issues>

- **Israel accuses Hezbollah of 'dangerous provocation'**

Israel on Thursday accused its Lebanese arch-foe Hezbollah of expanding observation posts along the border under the cover of an environmental NGO, in what it called a "dangerous provocation".

More details:

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/wires/afp/article-4630378/Israel-accuses-Hezbollah-dangerous-provocation.html>

- **UN Secretary-General Appoints Ex-Lebanese Minister to Head Mission in Libya**

United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres announced the appointment of Ghassan Salame of Lebanon as his Special Representative and Head of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL), according to official statement.

More details:

<https://sputniknews.com/africa/201706221054893539-un-lebanon-salame/>

- **Israel's Next War on Lebanon Will Kill Civilians, Air Force Commander Says**

The head of Israel's air force said that the military was prepared to launch another, surprise war against neighboring Lebanon if necessary and that, despite plans for a mass evacuation of civilians, innocent people were likely to die.

More details:

http://www.newsweek.com/israel-next-war-lebanon-kill-civilians-air-force-628321?piano_t=1

- **Top leaders agree to implement key Taif Accord provisions**

Lebanon's top political leaders agreed Thursday to press on with the implementation of remaining key provisions in the Taif Accord, while stressing the need to safeguard parity between Muslims and Christians and maintain the country's pluralistic system to move gradually toward a comprehensive civil state.

More details:

<http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Lebanon-News/2017/Jun-23/410632-top-leaders-agree-to-implement-key-taif-accord-provisions.ashx>

- **Loyalty to Resistance: New Election Law Qualitative Step toward Correcting Representation**

The "Loyalty to the Resistance" parliamentary bloc held its periodic meeting at its headquarters in Haret Hreik, under the chairmanship of MP Mohammad Raad and in the presence of bloc members.

More details:

<http://nna-leb.gov.lb/en/show-news/80685/Loyalty-to-Resistance-New-election-law-qualitative-step-toward-correcting-representation>

- **IDF officer says Lebanese army co-operating with Hizbullah**

There is growing evidence that the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) is co-operating with the Iranian-backed group Hizbullah, a senior Israeli officer has told Jane's .

More details:

<http://www.janes.com/article/71651/idf-officer-says-lebanese-army-co-operating-with-hizbullah>

- **Syrian Army, Hezbollah Foil Al-Qaeda's Border Infiltration**

The Al-Qaeda-linked Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (the Levant Liberation Board) militant group attempted to infiltrate the Syrian border from Lebanon's 'Arsal Municipality, resulting in a fierce battle with the Syrian Army and Hezbollah near Jaroud Faleeta.

More details:

<http://en.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13960401000793>

6. ARABIAN PENINSULA AND THE GULF OF BASRA

- **Saudi Arabia, UAE, Egypt and Bahrain send list of 13 demands to Qatar**

Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Egypt and Bahrain have sent Doha a list of 13 demands, including closing Al Jazeera television, reducing ties to their regional adversary Iran and closing of a Turkish military base in Qatar, Reuters reported.

More Details:

<https://news.am/eng/news/396765.html>

- **Investigation Shows Torture Conducted by UAE in ‘Black Sites’ in Yemen**

The United States is interrogating hundreds of men who were tortured by UAE prison guards, an AP investigation has revealed. Senior US military personnel confirmed their involvement, but denied any knowledge of human rights abuses.

More Details:

<https://www.albawaba.com/news/investigation-shows-torture-conducted-uae-%E2%80%98black-sites%E2%80%99-yemen-989614>

- **Al-Qaeda leader killed in Yemen**

A U.S. air strike has killed a regional Al-Qaeda leader and two associates in Yemen's Shabwa province, a jihadist stronghold in the south, the Pentagon said Thursday, according to AFP.

More Details:

<http://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx/231462>

- **UAE accused of backing secret network of prisons in Yemen**

Former prisoners, Yemeni officials and human rights lawyers say the United Arab Emirates and allied Yemeni forces are running a network of secret prisons across southern Yemen where hundreds of people detained in the hunt for al-Qaeda militants have disappeared and where torture and abuse are widespread.

More Details:

<http://www.sbs.com.au/news/article/2017/06/23/uae-accused-backing-secret-network-prisons-yemen>

- **UN's Sana'a office slams Saudi strikes on civilians**

The United Nations humanitarian coordinator in Yemen has slammed Saudi airstrikes against civilians and civilian infrastructure. Jamie McGoldrick urged parties to the conflict to show respect for international law and immediately resume peace talks.

More Details:

<http://www.presstv.com/Detail/2017/06/22/526205/UN-slams-Saudi-strikes-on-Yemeni-civilians>

- **Saudi Arabia gives Qatar 10 days to meet its demands: close Al-Jazeera and cut ties with Iran**

Saudi Arabia and its allies have presented Qatar with a list of 13 demands - including the closure of Al-Jazeera television and a scaling back of Qatar's links with Iran - that must be met to end the diplomatic and economic blockade of the small Gulf state.

More Details:

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2017/06/23/saudi-arabia-presents-demands-qatar-close-al-jazeera-cut-ties/>

- **Israel Deployed 18 Fighter Jets To Saudi Arabia To "Prevent A Coup": Fars**

While according to the official narrative, the Saudi power transition on Wednesday, when King Salman bin Abdulaziz announced his decision to replace Crown Prince Mohammed bin Nayef bin Abdulaziz with his own son, Mohammed bin Salman, went smooth and by the numbers, what took place behind the scenes is more interesting.

More Details:

<http://www.zerohedge.com/news/2017-06-22/israel-deployed-18-fighter-jets-saudi-arabia-prevent-coup-fars>

- **UAE-France anti-terror alliance a crucial move**

Following their meeting earlier this week, French President Emmanuel Macron and His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces found a lot of common ground in prioritising the need to resist terror and extremism, a United Arab Emirates newspaper has said.

More Details:

<http://wam.ae/en/details/1395302620453>

- **Kuwait, Oman, and the Qatar Crisis**

The ongoing Qatar crisis poses a major dilemma for Kuwait and Oman. Consistent with their “neutral” foreign policies, these two Arab Gulf states have maintained ties with Doha and seek to resolve the gravest internal Gulf Cooperation Council (G.C.C.) row since the organization’s establishment in 1981. Officials in Kuwait City and Muscat fear that failure to settle the Qatar crisis will break up the council, which would directly undermine vital Kuwaiti and Omani national interests given the potential for such a scenario to dramatically exacerbate regional geopolitical instability.

More Details:

<http://www.mei.edu/content/article/kuwait-oman-and-qatar-crisis>

7. EGYPT

- **Egypt extends emergency state by 3 months**

Egyptian cabinet decided on Thursday to extend the state of emergency in the country for three more months, state-owned Ahram newspaper reported. The decision to extend the emergency state was made during a cabinet meeting.

More details:

http://www.china.org.cn/world/2017-06/23/content_41083080.htm

- **Egypt Expands Media Crackdown; Rights Groups Lament Plight of Press**

Rights groups warn that rulers across the Middle East are stepping up efforts to silence political dissent, detaining journalists, shuttering newspapers and blocking news sites.

More details:

<https://www.voanews.com/a/egypt-expands-media-crackdown-rights-groups-lament-plight-press/3912022.html>

- **Egypt’s police kill 7 involved in violence against Christians**

Egyptian police have killed seven people in connection to recent violence against Christians that included three church bombings and a shooting which left around 100 people dead, the Interior Ministry said on Thursday.

More details:

<http://www.arabnews.com/node/1119226/middle-east>

- **Rafah Crossing Still Closed after 100 Days**

Rafah Crossing, the main artery for Palestinians in Gaza to travel out of the Strip, has been closed for 103 consecutive days, with no indication that it will reopen soon, Quds Press reported yesterday.

More details:

<http://imemc.org/article/rafah-crossing-still-closed-after-100-days/>

- **President Sisi explains Egypt's stand on Nile Basin**

Egypt's President Abdel-Fattah El-Sisi has revealed that Egypt is suffering from a water deficit of about 21.5 billion cubic metres per year, and is cautious of any agreements related to the River Nile that could affect this supply.

More details:

<https://www.independent.co.ug/president-sisi-explains-egypts-stand-nile-basin/>

- **Al Jazeera Sued for Endangering Reporters, Supporting Muslim Brotherhood in 2013 Egyptian Revolution**

Former Al Jazeera English bureau chief Mohamed Fahmy and Al Jazeera English cameraman Mohamed Fawzi were convicted in 2014 on charges of collaborating with the Muslim Brotherhood to spread the terrorist group's agenda via fabricated news stories in the Egyptian revolt. Fahmy served 438 days in an Egyptian prison while Fawzi sought asylum in the United States.

More details:

<http://freebeacon.com/national-security/al-jazeera-sued-endangering-reporters-supporting-muslim-brotherhood-2013-egyptian-revolution/>

- **Egypt president ratifies capital gains tax freeze extension, approves stamp duty**

Egypt's President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi has signed off on a stamp duty on stock exchange transactions for both buyers and sellers, set at 1.25 Egyptian pounds per 1,000 for the first year, a decree published in the official gazette on Thursday showed.

More details:

<http://www.nasdaq.com/article/egypt-president-ratifies-capital-gains-tax-freeze-extension-approves-stamp-duty-20170622-00949>

- **Egypt Says 7 Militants Killed In Raid on Desert Camp**

Egypt's Interior Ministry says it has killed seven people in connection with recent attacks on the country's embattled Christian minority, including three church bombings and a deadly bus shooting, all claimed by the Islamic State group.

More details:

http://hosted.ap.org/dynamic/stories/M/ML_EGYPT_VIOLENCE?SITE=AP&SECTION=HOME&TEMPLATE=DEFAULT&CTIME=2017-06-22-13-02-53

- **Five foreign firms win \$750 mln seismic contracts in Egypt's Red Sea**

Egypt has accepted five foreign firms' bids for seismic survey of the Red Sea area worth a total investment of up to \$750 million, the Ministry of Petroleum said on Wednesday.

More details:

<http://en.amwalalghad.com/investment-news/industry-trade/57657-five-foreign-firms-win-750-mln-seismic-contracts-in-egypts-red-sea.html>

- **Egypt court ruling revives row over ergot fungus in wheat imports**

A court that ordered the suspension of Egypt's food inspection system based its ruling in part on the quarantine service's right to ban grain imports with any trace of the ergot fungus, raising the possibility the controversial rule could be restored.

More details:

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-egypt-wheat-idUSKBN19E02M?rpc=401&>

8. NORTH AFRICA

- **Moroccans Voice Solidarity with Al-Rif Protesters**

Residents of Morocco's northern city of Al-Hoceima on Thursday beat pots and pans on their rooftops to show solidarity with ongoing popular demonstrations in the restive Al-Rif region. Residents of the city, which is located on the northern cusp of the Rif Mountains, staged their impromptu demonstration on Thursday to protest the arrest by the Moroccan authorities of dozens of protesters and activists in Al-Rif.

More Details:

<http://aa.com.tr/en/middle-east/moroccans-voice-solidarity-with-al-rif-protesters/847364>

- **Morocco Protest Leader ‘Beaten’ During Arrest — NGOs**

The leader of a protest movement in northern Morocco was "severely" beaten and verbally abused by police during his arrest, Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International said Thursday. Nasser Zefzafi — leader of Al Hirak Al Shaabi, or the "Popular Movement" — was detained on May 29 in a village 50 kilometres from the city of Al Hoceima along with two fellow activists.

More Details:

<http://jordantimes.com/news/region/morocco-protest-leader-beaten'-during-arrest---ngos>

- **Morocco Finalizes Entry into BDEAC Capital**

Morocco has officially finalized its entry into the the capital of the Development Bank of Central African States for a total amount of 4.52 billion FCFA, Minister of Economy and Finance Mohammed Boussaid announced Wednesday. Boussaid and Zounguer Sokambi Armand Guy, Vice-President of the Central African Development Bank (BDEAC), signed on Wednesday in Rabat, the formal agreement of the participation of Morocco in the social capital of the BDEAC, according to an official statement.

More Details:

<https://www.moroccoworldnews.com/2017/06/220747/morocco-finalizes-entry-bdeac-capital/>

- **Mitsubishi, Sumitomo Seal Tunisia Power Project Deal**

Mitsubishi Hitachi Power Systems (MHPS) and Sumitomo Corporation signed an engineering, procurement and construction (EPC) contract with Societe Tunisienne de l'Electricite et du Gaz (STEG) for a gas-fired combined cycle power plant in Tunisia. The project, which boasts a 450 MW generation capacity, will come up at Rades in Ben Arous Governorate.

More Details:

http://www.tradearabia.com/news/IND_326708.html

- **Caïd Essebsi Meets Nigeria’s Minister of Foreign Affairs**

President Beji Caïd Essebsi received, on Thursday at Carthage Palace, Nigerian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Geoffrey Onyeama. According to a statement issued by the Presidency of the Republic, the Nigerian Minister of Foreign Affairs is currently on a working visit to Tunisia (21-23 June), at the invitation of his Tunisian counterpart, Khemaïes Jhinaoui.

More Details:

<https://www.tap.info.tn/en/Portal-Politics/9138677-caïd-essebsi-meets>

- **Protesters Close Oil Pump in Southern Tunisia**

Around 100 people from the city of Douz in the province of Kebili, 500 kilometres south of Tunis, yesterday closed a number of oil and gas pipelines in protest against the government's failure to meet their demands for employment.

More Details:

<https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20170622-protesters-close-oil-pump-in-southern-tunisia/>

- **Libyan Money in UAE could End up in Saif Gaddafi's Hands, Report**

The Sunday Times reported investigators following up the case of Libyan smuggled money abroad as saying that about 30 billion dollars out of 50 billion in the United Arab Emirates could end up going to Saif Al-Islam Gaddafi – the recently released son of late dictator Muamar Gaddafi. According to the report of the British newspaper, there is no evidence that the UAE has executed the decision to freeze those Libyan assets.

More Details:

<http://www.libyanexpress.com/libyan-money-in-uae-could-end-up-in-saif-gaddafis-hands-report/>

- **Plan on Libyan border to include African accords – Alfano**

Italian Foreign Minister Angelino Alfano, arriving at the European People's Party (EPP) summit on Thursday, said Italy has a "comprehensive plan" to manage migrant flows on the central Mediterranean route. He said the objective is "better control of the northern Libya border and helping through accords" with African countries of transit, to avoid "the entrance of migrants departing from the Horn of Africa in Libya".

More Details:

http://www.ansamed.info/ansamed/en/news/sections/politics/2017/06/22/alfano-says-plan-on-libyan-border-to-include-african-accords_b944c0d5-7968-4c8d-821d-85d3cc4238ff.html

- **LNA Closes Down a Benghazi Local Defence Militia**

The Libyan National Army (LNA) has ordered the disbandment of one of the district civilian militias that sprang up in Benghazi after 2014. The Al-Majouri Protection Force has been told to hand over its vehicles, weapons and equipment to the LNA's anti-terrorism unit. It staged a brief ceremony today in which it said it was complying with the instruction from the LNA's Judicial and Control authority.

More Details:

<https://www.libyaherald.com/2017/06/22/lna-closes-down-a-benghazi-local-defence-militia/>

- **How to Root Out ISIS from Libya**

True national reconciliation and inclusiveness are necessary ingredients for ending the cycle of statelessness and radicalization that has created a fertile ground for terrorist groups, including the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS), to flourish in Libya, according to a new Atlantic Council report. “People who fought in Syria, we call that the undergrad for jihad, they went to Libya to get their post-grad degree in jihad,” said Jason Pack, founder of Eye on ISIS in Libya and executive director of the US-Libya Business Association.

More Details:

<http://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/new-atlanticist/how-to-root-out-isis-from-libya>

9. AFGHANISTAN – PAKISTAN

- **Mine attack kills six police officers in Afghanistan's Helmand**

SIX police officers, including a local commander, were killed and two others were wounded when a mine, emplaced by unidentified militants under a bridge, detonated targeting a police tank on the Helmand-Kanadaha highway in Popalzai Khash village in Greshk district in Afghanistan's Helmand province on 20 June, Afghan Islamic Press reported. No group immediately claimed responsibility for the attack.

More Details:

<http://www.janes.com/article/71695/mine-attack-kills-six-police-officers-in-afghanistan-s-helmand>

- **Afghanistan's Delayed Elections Set For One Year's Time**

The elections were originally set to take place in June 2015, but were postponed due to disagreements between President Ashraf Ghani and Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah on electoral reforms.

More Details:

[http://www.lse.co.uk/AllNews.asp?code=oe470e7c&headline=Afghanistans Delayed Elections Set For One Years Time](http://www.lse.co.uk/AllNews.asp?code=oe470e7c&headline=Afghanistans%20Delayed%20Elections%20Set%20For%20One%20Years%20Time)

- **Blast kills 9, injures several in Pakistan's Quetta**

At least 9 people were killed and 20 others injured in a terrorist blast near the office of Balochistan Police Chief in south western city of Quetta on Friday.

More Details:

<http://www.irna.ir/en/News/82574652/>

- **Terror alert sounded in Punjab border regions**

Twin border towns of Pathankot and Gurdaspur in Punjab have been put on high alert after intelligence inputs said some Pakistan-trained militants have infiltrated into Punjab to create terror.

More Details:

<http://www.deccanherald.com/content/618815/terror-alert-sounded-punjab-border.html>

- **Islamabad slams US drone attacks in Pakistan**

Islamabad has condemned the drone strikes by the United States against alleged militants on Pakistani soil, describing them as a violation of Pakistan's sovereignty.

More Details:

<http://www.presstv.com/Detail/2017/06/23/526217/Pakistan-Nafees-Zakaria-US-drone-strikes>

- **Pakistan tightens business visa procedures for Chinese nationals after alleged Islamic State killings**

Under the revised rules for renewing existing liberal business visas, Chinese nationals would need to get referral letters and long-term business visa extensions from higher authorities in Pakistan, the Pakistan newspaper, the Dawn, reported.

More Details:

<http://www.scmp.com/news/china/policies-politics/article/2099603/pakistan-tightens-business-visa-procedures-chinese>

- **Pakistan, China working closely for Afghanistan peace: FO**

Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi is visiting Islamabad this weekend to discuss matters pertaining to peace and stability in Afghanistan.

More Details:

<https://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2017/06/23/pakistan-china-working-closely-for-afghanistan-peace-fo/>

- **'Pakistan, Australia should develop sustainable partnership'**

Senior Trade and Investment Commissioner of Australian Trade & Investment Commission John Madew Thursday called on LCCI acting president Amjad Ai Jawa and vice president Muhammad Nasir Hameed Khan and had a detailed discussion on trade and economic issues. Regional Business Development Manager of Australian Trade & Investment Commission Imran Saeed Khan was also present on the occasion.

More Details:

<http://nation.com.pk/business/23-Jun-2017/pakistan-australia-should-develop-sustainable-partnership>

- **Removal of barricades starts in Kabul city today: officials**

The Afghan government officials are saying that the removal of barricades from across the Kabul roads will be launched today based on a decree by President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani.

More Details:

<http://www.khaama.com/removal-of-barricades-starts-in-kabul-city-today-officials-03007>

10.TURKEY AND THE MIDDLE EAST

- **Turkey, Iran boost Qatar support amid Saudi Arabia blockade**

Iran and Turkey have reportedly increased their support for Qatar by shipping thousands of tons of foodstuffs to the Persian Gulf state, which has been under an economic siege by Saudi Arabia and a number of its allies.

More Details:

<http://iran-daily.com/News/195305.html>

- **Turkish aid agency builds Afghan orphanage**

A 190-bed orphanage in northern Afghanistan built by Turkey's aid agency held its opening ceremony Friday. The orphanage in Afghanistan's third-largest city, Mazar-i-Sharif, close to the border with Uzbekistan, was built by the Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA). Speaking at the inauguration ceremony, Labor Minister Faizullah Zaki said: "Turkey displays true brotherhood; they are with Afghanistan in good times and bad times."

More Details:

<http://aa.com.tr/en/asia-pacific/turkish-aid-agency-builds-afghan-orphanage/847702>

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.*

Bu bülten **ORSAM Ortadoğu Uzman Yardımcısı Firuze Yağmur Gökler tarafından hazırlanmaktadır. Bülten Ortadoğu ülkelerinin yerel haber kaynaklarından derlenmektedir. Belirtilen görüşler bölge ülkelerinin haber kaynaklarına ve ismi geçen yazarlara ait olup ORSAM'ın görüşünü yansıtmamaktadır.*