



MIDDLE EAST DAILY BULLETIN

GÜNLÜK ORTADOĞU BÜLTENİ

Domestic Policy in the Middle East Countries

Bölge Ülkelerinde İç Siyaset

The Restructuring Proces of Iraq

Irak'ın Yeniden Yapılanma Süreci

Energy Security

Enerji Güvenliği

Economy News

Ekonomi Haberleri

Peace Process

Barış Süreci

Ethnic and Secterian Groups

Etnik ve Mezhepsel Gruplar

Non State Actors

Devlet-dışı Aktörler

Relations with the West

Batı'yla İlişkiler

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1. IRAQ

- **UNHCR provides legal assistance to displaced Iraqi families**

The UN Refugee Agency, UNHCR, with its partners, has provided legal assistance to help more than 2,500 Iraqis displaced as a result of the Mosul offensive to receive new civil identity cards and other documents that were lost, damaged or destroyed as they fled their homes seeking safety. As many as 49 percent of displaced Iraqis interviewed by UNHCR protection partners were found to need help in getting new civil documentation. Many families lost documents or their papers were damaged as they fled conflict zones. Other families were told that birth and marriage documents, which had been issued when their areas were under the control of armed groups, were not legally recognised by the government of Iraq and needed replacement.

More Details:

<http://wam.ae/en/details/1395302600105>

- **Albania to Send Troops to Fight ISIS in Iraq**

Albania will send troops to Iraq to aid the global coalition against Islamic State, ISIS, the Defence Minister has told a parliamentary commission. Albanian troops will set foot in Iraq again, nine years after their last operations there ceased, as part of global anti-ISIS voluntary operations in response to a request of the US government.

More Details:

<http://www.focus-fen.net/news/2017/02/28/416721/balkan-insight-albania-to-send-troops-to-fight-isis-in-iraq.html>

- **IS female bomber arrested in eastern Mosul before attacking school**

Iraqi forces arrested early Tuesday a girl believed to be an Islamic State member before carrying out a suicide bombing at a girls school in the security-controlled eastern Mosul. Sputnik News, quoting a local source, reported that the girl, putting on an explosive belt, was on her way to blow herself up inside a girls-only school in Wahda district. Police sealed off the school's vicinity, according to the source, who said that many IS-linked women had managed to melt within civilians though implicated in brutal abuses against Iraqi women over the past two years.

More Details:

<http://www.iraqinews.com/iraq-war/female-bomber-arrested-eastern-mosul-attacking-school/>

- **Pentagon report on speeding up anti-Isis fight in Iraq and Syria delivered**

The much-awaited Pentagon report on how to accelerate the fight against Isis in Iraq and Syria was presented on Monday (27 February) during a meeting of senior US officials. President Donald Trump had sought for the plan through a 28 January presidential memorandum, but it was not clear if he attended the meeting.

More Details:

<http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/pentagon-report-speeding-anti-isis-fight-iraq-syria-delivered-1608902>

- **Two Ezidi women and a child freed in western Mosul**

On Monday, two rescued Kurdish Yezidi (Ezidi) women and a child from the Islamic State (IS) in western Mosul were handed over to Peshmerga forces in northern of the city. The two women and a six-year-old kid were rescued by the security forces and security guards of the Deputy Nineveh Governor in Mosul. Sheikh Muhiyaddin, Head of Public Relations at the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) office in Mosul told Kurdistan24 that the Iraqi security forces have helped to rescue the three Ezidis.

More Details:

<http://www.kurdistan24.net/en/news/b39bbec1-4b88-4716-8273-56a1d98a7017/Two-Ezidi-women-and-a-child-freed-in-western-Mosul>

- **In Iraq, desperation clouds uncertain future**

A baby's cry pierces the din as dozens of people wait to see a doctor or nurse at what's surely one of the busiest health clinics in the Middle East: inside a sprawling refugee camp that's home to 18,000 displaced men, women and children. The clinic's future is as unclear as that of its clientele.

More Details:

<http://www.therecord.com/news-story/7162613-in-iraq-desperation-clouds-uncertain-future/>

- **Damage inflicted on Iraqi heritage by Daesh much worse than thought, says UNESCO**

The director-general of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) has revealed that the damage inflicted on Iraqi heritage by Daesh's actions are much worse than previously thought. Irina Bokova said on Sunday that UNESCO wants to protect Iraqi artefacts from any future damage. According to Iraqi officials, they have retrieved looted artefacts which were found within tunnels in Mosul. The battle to liberate the city from Daesh is ongoing.

More Details:

<https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20170227-damage-inflicted-on-iraqi-heritage-by-daesh-much-worse-than-thought-says-unesco/>

- **Trump is already losing the long-term fight in Iraq**

Iraqi government forces last week launched a crucial campaign to retake the western side of Mosul, the Islamic State's largest remaining urban stronghold. U.S. planes and special forces were providing critical close-up support for a battle that commanders believe could drag on for months. Victory is not assured and the humanitarian cost, which Iraqi forces managed to minimize in capturing the eastern side of the city, could steeply rise. Yet the biggest challenge looms beyond the immediate battle: whether Mosul and other Sunni-populated areas of Iraq can be stabilized once the jihadists are driven out. Unfortunately, in his first weeks in office President Trump has significantly worsened the chances for success.

More Details:

<http://www.edmontonsun.com/2017/02/27/trump-is-already-losing-the-long-term-fight-in-iraq>

- **Mosul caught in 'strange and terrifying' battle as IS foreign soldiers fight to the end**

Above ground, soldiers from Iraq's Rapid Response division move from house to house through the same openings Islamic State militants smashed through the walls in preparation to defend their last remaining stronghold in the city's west. The passageway led them through living rooms and gardens, into a kitchen with a pot of lentil soup on the counter -- the scenes of domesticity highlighting the chaos of war that is intensifying as Iraqi forces advance.

More Details:

<http://www.timeslive.co.za/world/2017/02/28/Mosul-caught-in-strange-and-terrifying-battle-as-IS-foreign-soldiers-fight-to-the-end>

- **Imam at Pristina's Largest Mosque Charged With Inciting Terrorism**

Kosovo's special prosecutor has charged the imam of the country's main mosque with inciting terrorism by encouraging worshipers to go to Syria and Iraq and "wage jihad." In a February 27 statement, the prosecutor said Imam Shefqet Krasniqi had used his preaching and social networks in a way that "pushed others to take the road towards the conflict zone in Syria and Iraq and then commit terrorist acts."

More Details:

<http://www.rferl.org/a/imam-krasniqi-pristina-largest-mosque-charged-inciting-terrorism/28337432.html>

- **Targeted in Iraq by Al-Qaeda and ISIS, refugees seek safety in Tucson**

The letters threatening them with death became unbearable. Surgical nurses Hasanain Alsamawi and his wife, Saleemah Alrubay, decided they must leave Iraq and try to emigrate to another country. They say Hasanain's brother worked for the U.S. Army — which is why the family was under death threats.

More Details:

http://tucson.com/news/local/targeted-in-iraq-by-al-qaeda-and-isis-refugees-seek/article_3920ce48-41fc-54a6-b196-373fc9c44055.html

- **Iraq Plans Offshore Oil, Gas Exploration To Boost Reserves**

Iraq is planning to start offshore oil and gas exploration to boost its reserves, Oil Minister Jabar al-Luaibi said in a statement on Feb. 27. Luaibi said he "gave guidance to the Oil Exploration [Co.] about the importance of exploring territorial waters to assess the hydrocarbons reserves and to boost Iraq's capacity." During the week of Feb. 20, Iraq announced an increase in its oil reserves to 153 billion barrels (Bbbl) from a previous estimate of 143 Bbbl.

More Details:

<http://www.epmag.com/iraq-plans-offshore-oil-gas-exploration-boost-reserves-1482036>

- **Bank Sepah Expanding Ties with Iraq**

Iranian and Iraqi officials in Tehran discussed further expansion of bilateral banking ties. During a meeting with Iraqi Ambassador to Iran Rajeh Saber Abboud al-Mousavi on Monday, Bank Sepah's CEO Mohammad Kazem Choghazardi said, "Since the sanctions imposed on our banking system were lifted about a year ago, Bank Sepah equipped its offshore branches and its foreign exchange transactions exceeded \$5 billion."

More Details:

<https://financialtribune.com/articles/economy-business-and-markets/60550/bank-sepah-expanding-ties-with-iraq>

- **Prioritise safety of Mosul civilians: paper**

A UAE newspaper has said that extreme care should be taken to protect civilians as Iraqi forces push deeper into Western Mosul. "Indications are that more than 200 civilians have been killed or wounded in the last three days alone and this is a matter of concern," said The Gulf Today in an editorial on Tuesday. "Western Mosul is the last significant urban area Daesh holds in Iraq. The area is densely populated, with many narrow streets, and the fighting is expected to be street by street. Adding to the challenge is the fact that armed groups have built a network of tunnels.

More Details:

<http://wam.ae/en/details/1395302600114>

- **Desperate times obscure Canada's support in Iraq's uncertain future**

A baby's cry pierces the din as dozens of people wait to see a doctor or nurse at what's surely one of the busiest health clinics in the Middle East: inside a sprawling refugee camp that's home to 18,000 displaced men, women and children. The clinic's future is as unclear as that of its clientele.

More Details:

<https://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2017/02/27/desperate-times-obscure-canadas-support-in-iraqs-uncertain-future.html>

- **MWC 2017: Wikipedia goes data free in Iraq**

Access to Wikipedia will not incur mobile data charges to customers of the Asiacell mobile phone provider in Iraq, the organisation has announced. It is part of the Wikipedia Zero scheme that has operated in 59 countries around the world since 2012. The Wikimedia Foundation says it wants to "bring the sum of human knowledge" to as many people as possible. However some argue that projects such as this go against the principles of net neutrality.

More Details:

<http://www.bbc.com/news/technology-39101877>

- **TV journalist Shifa Gardi killed in Iraq covering battle to reclaim Mosul from ISIS**

Shifa Gardi, an Iraqi Kurdish TV journalist who was covering the battle to retake Mosul from ISIS, was killed by a roadside bomb on Saturday, her news organization Rudaw TV reports. "Shifa Gardi was one of Rudaw's most daring journalists," the Kurdish media organization said. "She was known as a renowned skilled journalist in Kurdish news media, and brought outstanding coverage to Rudaw TV right from the beginning of its establishment."

More Details:

<http://nytlive.nytimes.com/womenintheworld/2017/02/27/tv-journalist-shifa-gardi-killed-in-iraq-covering-battle-to-reclaim-mosul-from-isis/>

- **Mosul exodus: Thousands flee, over 750,000 Iraqi civilians trapped in anti-ISIS battle zone**

As a US-backed offensive pushes into the western neighborhoods of Mosul, more than 2,000 people left the Iraqi city over the weekend. But with hundreds of thousands of civilians caught in the

fighting, camps near the city cannot house all the displaced. In what is believed to be the biggest exodus since local forces stepped up their operations to retake the western part of the city from Islamic State terrorist group (IS, formerly ISIS/ISIL) a week ago, the UN is now working to expand its camps near the city.

More Details:

<https://www.rt.com/news/378817-mosul-civilians-iraq-isis-battle/>

- **Islamic State in Western Mosul on Offensive as Iraqi Forces Advance**

If you trap a cat in a closet, he will fight like hell to get out," says Ahmed Ghalibi as multiple car bombings send smoke billowing over a nearby Iraqi neighborhood. Standing Sunday on a rooftop with a view of the week-old fight for western Mosul, Ghalibi, a soldier with Iraq's Emergency Response Unit — one of the branches of the Iraqi armed forces leading the charge into Islamic State-controlled territories — says he has witnessed the battle for Mosul change abruptly.

More Details:

<http://www.voanews.com/a/islamic-state-western-mosul-offensive-iraqi-forces-advance/3741883.html>

2. SYRIA

- **UN Council Set To Defy Russian Veto of Sanctions over Syrian Gas Attacks**

The UN Security Council is set to vote on a bid by Western powers to impose sanctions on the Syrian government for toxic-gas attacks during the civil war, despite a Russian pledge to veto the move.

More details:

<http://www.rferl.org/a/syria-russia-sanctions-council-defy-veto/28337713.html>

- **Syrian Kurdish ENKS delegation arrives in Washington for talks with US officials**

A senior delegation of the Syrian Kurdish National Council (ENKS-KNC) arrived on Monday in Washington DC on an official visit called by US government.

More details:

<http://ekurd.net/syrian-enks-washington-talks-2017-02-28>

- **Syria opposition calls for Russian backing in Geneva**

Main opposition group hopes support from Moscow in negotiations will put pressure on Damascus.

More details:

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/02/syria-opposition-calls-russian-support-geneva-170227204410453.html>

- **CENTCOM Head Visits Syrian Rebel Allies, Concerning Turkey**

U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) General Joseph Votel made an unannounced visit to Syria last week to meet with the heads of the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), a militia fighting the Islamic State largely composed of Kurdish fighters.

More details:

<http://www.breitbart.com/national-security/2017/02/27/trump-sends-top-mideast-commander-meet-syrian-kurds-alarms-turkey/>

- **Warplanes bomb rebel-held parts of northwest Syria as Geneva talks continue**

Airstrikes on Syria's rebel-held Idlib province killed at least 11 people on Monday, opposition activists said, in the latest spasm of violence to mar U.N.-brokered talks in Geneva between the government and the opposition.

More details:

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2017/02/28/world/warplanes-bomb-rebel-held-parts-northwest-syria-geneva-talks-continue/#.WLU2pm-LTIU>

- **Documents reveal why Canada rejected dozens of Syrian refugee claimants**

Government documents obtained by the National Post reveal why Canada rejected dozens of Syrians as refugees, and provide a "high-level overview" of the backgrounds of those who were selected.

More details:

<http://www.vancouversun.com/news/national/documents+reveal+canada+rejected+dozens+syrian+refugee/13007514/story.html>

- **Syrian army advance opens new link to Kurdish areas**

A Syrian army advance against Islamic State in northern Syria has opened a new link between government-held areas in western Syria and the Kurdish-dominated northeast, redrawing the map of the conflict near the Turkish border.

More details:

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-north-idUSKBN166250>

- **Activists Say Syrian Pro-government Forces Near IS-held Palmyra**

Syrian activists say pro-government forces have reached the outskirts of Palmyra in their push to drive Islamic State militants from the ancient town.

More details:

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2017-02-28/activists-syrian-pro-government-forces-near-is-held-palmyra>

- **Kazakhstan ready to host another technical meeting on Syria if needed, Kazakh diplomat says**

Kazakhstan is ready to host another technical meeting on settling the Syrian crisis, should the need for such a meeting arise, Kazakh Deputy Foreign Minister Mukhtar Tleuberdi said on Tuesday.

More details:

<http://sana.sy/en/?p=101043>

- **Pentagon Declines to Confirm Russia Included in Anti-Daesh Fight Plan**

According to the Pentagon spokesperson, the US Department of Defense has completed the 30-day review of the strategy to defeat Daesh, but refused to confirm that the report included the proposal to cooperate with Russia in Syria.

More details:

<https://sputniknews.com/world/201702271051090165-pentagon-daesh-strategy-review/>

3. IRAN

- **Iran, EU to hold joint seminar on nuclear coop**

Iran and the European Union will hold a two-day high-level seminar on nuclear cooperation starting today in Brussels.

More Details:

<http://en.mehrnews.com/news/123901/iran-EU-to-hold-joint-seminar-on-nuclear-coop>

- **Tehran says policy towards Riyadh is 'clear'**

Government spokesman Mohammad Baqer Nobakht said on Monday that Iran's stance on Saudi Arabia is "clear", noting the Islamic Republic has adopted an "active" policy towards Riyadh.

More Details:

<http://www.tehrantimes.com/news/411508/Tehran-says-policy-towards-Riyadh-is-clear>

- **Iran's Zarif calls for new regional economic architecture among ECO member states**

Islamabad, Feb 28, IRNA – Addressing the opening session of the 22nd ECO Council of Ministers meeting, the outgoing Chairman and Iran's Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif says new regional economic architecture among ECO member states is required to ensure implementation of 'Vision 2025'.

More Details:

<http://www.irna.ir/en/News/82447200/>

- **Iran, Indonesia sign banking cooperation deal**

Iran and Indonesia have signed an agreement to promote their banking cooperation – a move both countries say was necessary to help facilitate trade.

More Details:

<http://www.iran-daily.com/News/188495.html>

- **Iranian navy test-fires torpedo as part of ongoing military drills**

The naval forces of the Iranian army have test fired the country's latest torpedo dubbed "Valfajr" during the ongoing massive military drills in in the country's southern waters.

More Details:

<http://en.trend.az/iran/politics/2726531.html>

- **IMF says Iran rebounds after nuclear deal, but danger looms**

The International Monetary Fund says Iran's economy has rebounded after the nuclear deal with world powers, but warns that uncertainty over future sanctions and problems with the country's domestic banks could cause trouble ahead.

More Details:

<http://www.orlandosentinel.com/business/sns-bc-ml--iran-imf-20170228-story.html>

- **Iran-Russia oil deal a “relic” of sanctions era (exclusive)**

The currently discussed oil deal between Iran and Russia is a relic of the years when Iran was under sanctions, when the deal was of high importance to Tehran, says Iran’s OPEC representative Mohammad Ali Khatibi.

More Details:

<http://en.trend.az/iran/business/2726508.html>

- **Need for Closer Tehran-Ankara Ties Underlined**

Iran’s Ambassador to Turkey Mohammad Ebrahim Taherian highlighted the importance of enhancing bilateral ties between Tehran and Ankara in diverse fields.

More Details:

<https://financialtribune.com/articles/national/60546/need-for-closer-tehran-ankara-ties-underlined>

- **Five presidents, three PMs to participate in ECO summit**

The stage is set for 13th summit of the 10 countries of Economic Cooperation Organisation (ECO) being hosted here Wednesday (tomorrow). Eight heads of states/ governments have confirmed to participate in the summit including Turkey’s President Recept Tayyip Erdogan and Iranian President Dr Hasan Rouhani.

More Details:

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/189286-Five-presidents-three-PMs-to-participate-in-ECO-summit>

4. ISRAEL – PALESTINE

- **Palestinian diaspora creates new political entity**

Conference organisers establish new group to represent diaspora communities and strive for greater Palestinian rights.

More details:

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/02/palestinians-create-political-entity-170226181036908.html>

- **Israel opens criminal investigation into German submarine contract**

Israel's justice ministry said Monday it had launched an investigation into alleged corruption surrounding a submarine deal which reportedly involves people close to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

More details:

<http://www.defencetalk.com/israel-opens-criminal-investigation-into-german-submarine-contract-69314/>

- **Bernie Sanders calls for ending the 50-year Israeli occupation**

Democratic Senator and former presidential candidate Bernie Sanders has called for an end of the "50-year occupation" of the Palestinian territory by Israel in a speech on Monday, saying that Washington should pursue policies that would ensure "prosperous future for Jews and Arabs, Israelis and Palestinians alike".

More details:

<http://www.middleeasteye.net/news/bernie-sanders-calls-ending-50-year-israeli-occupation-401081581>

- **Palestine: Abbas Pleads For Nations to Support Two-State Solution**

Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas urged international support yesterday for a two-state solution to end Israel's occupation.

More details:

<http://www.morningstaronline.co.uk/a-6091-Palestine-Abbas-pleads-for-nations-to-support-two-state-solution>

- **Veteran Labour MP who called for sanctions against Israel dies aged 86**

"Sir Gerald dedicated his life to serving those who he believed would benefit most from a Labour government and Labour values in action," his family said.

More details:

<https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20170227-veteran-labour-mp-who-called-for-sanctions-against-israel-dies-aged-86/>

- **Arabs now strategize to take down Israeli courts**

Palestinian leaders are proposing a new tactic to combat Israel's "occupation" of the West Bank, recommending that the Palestinian court system, rather than Israel's, be used to resolve land disputes and other issues, according to a report in Joseph Farah's G2 Bulletin.

More Details:

<http://www.wnd.com/2017/02/arabs-now-strategize-to-take-down-israeli-courts/#0feCebOSZTVEQkYv.99>

- **Intermittent Clashes in Ain el-Hilweh despite Ceasefire Agreement**

Despite an evening ceasefire agreement in the southern Palestinian refugee camp of Ain el-Hilweh in Sidon, tension escalated once again overnight and the sound of hand grenades explosions and sporadic sniper activity were heard in the camp, the state-run National News Agency reported on Tuesday.

More details:

<http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/226167-intermittent-clashes-in-ain-el-hilweh-despite-ceasefire-agreement>

- **Facebook shuts official account of Palestine's ruling party**

Facebook has shut down the page of Palestinian president Mahmud Abbas's party Fatah, apparently over a picture of late leader Yasser Arafat with a weapon, the movement said.

More details:

http://www.business-standard.com/article/technology/facebook-shuts-official-account-of-palestine-s-ruling-party-117022800069_1.html

- **Israeli forces shoot and injure Palestinian woman at Qalandiya checkpoint**

A Palestinian woman was shot and injured by Israeli security guards at the Qalandiya checkpoint between the occupied West Bank and occupied East Jerusalem on Monday afternoon, as Israeli police claimed she was carrying a bag in a "suspicious manner."

More details:

<http://www.albawaba.com/news/israeli-forces-shoot-and-injure-palestinian-woman-qalandiya-checkpoint-943298>

5. JORDAN and LEBANON

- **Report: Gulf, International Officials Vexed by Lebanon's Performance**

In light of Lebanon's inability to agree on a number of issues that guarantee a smooth political activity after the election of President Michel Aoun, reports said that Gulf and International countries are dissatisfied with Lebanon's policy mainly with regard to international resolutions, decisions related to the Syrian regime and positions related to Hizbullah and its arms, media reports said on Tuesday.

More details:

<http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/226165-report-gulf-international-officials-vexed-by-lebanon-s-performance>

- **A Hezbollah sign near kibbutz: 'Israel is weak'**

A farmer from Kibbutz Malkiya in the Upper Galilee noticed a provocative sign posted on Lebanese territory, about 800 meters from the kibbutz.

More details:

<http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-4928469,00.html>

- **Government pledges 3m euro to Syrian refugees**

The Government has pledged another 3 million euro to support Syrian refugees who have fled the civil war to Jordan and Lebanon.

More details:

<http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/republic-of-ireland/government-pledges-3m-euro-to-syrian-refugees-35487240.html>

- **Kuwaiti Ambassador hopes Lebanese will agree on election law**

Kuwaiti Ambassador to Lebanon, Abdul Al al-Qinai, hoped on Monday that the Lebanese would eventually reach agreement on an election law and achieve the imminent legislative polls.

More details:

<http://nna-leb.gov.lb/en/show-news/75876/Kuwaiti-Ambassador-hopes-Lebanese-will-agree-on-election-law>

- **Activists applaud Royal committee's recommendations on women rights**

Women's rights activists on Monday hailed as "historic and a dream that has come true" the recommendations made by a Royal committee to protect women's rights.

More details:

<https://www.jordantimes.com/news/local/activists-applaud-royal-committee%E2%80%99s-recommendations-women-rights>

- **Lebanon Launches Campaign to Support Areas Affected by Refugee Crisis**

The Lebanese government is setting up an infrastructure plan, which targets areas that are most affected by the Syrian refugee crisis and provides care to the Lebanese population, which is incurring heavy burdens due to the large influx of refugees since the beginning of the Syrian war in early 2011.

More details:

<http://english.aawsat.com/2017/02/article55368289/lebanon-launches-campaign-support-areas-affected-refugee-crisis>

- **Jordan, Iraq discuss exempting certain exports from customs duties**

Jordanian and Iraqi officials on Monday opened a discussion on prospects for exempting certain Iraq-bound Jordanian exports from custom duties and agreed to set relevant criteria for that purpose.

More Details

http://petra.gov.jo/Public_News/Nws_NewsDetails.aspx?lang=2&site_id=&NewsID=291108&CatID=13

- **Aoun calls 'Irregularities' in Christian-Druze ties a 'historic mistake that won't be repeated'**

President Michel Aoun said on Monday that no one will be able to strain the relations between Christians and Druze in Lebanon, stressing the importance of unity in the Mount Lebanon.

More details:

<http://yalibnan.com/2017/02/27/aoun-calls-irregularities-in-christian-druze-ties-a-historic-mistake-that-wont-be-repeated/>

- **With USD 75 bln debts, Lebanon issues new Eurobonds**

Lebanese Finance Minister Ali Hassan Khalil affirmed on Monday the government persistence to shore up the economy.

More details:

<http://www.kuna.net.kw/ArticleDetails.aspx?id=2593994&Language=en>

- **.UAE envoy meets UN Special Coordinator for Lebanon**

Hamad Saeed Sultan Al Shamsi, the UAE Ambassador to Lebanon, received on Monday Sigrid Kaag, the UN Special Coordinator for Lebanon, at the embassy's headquarters in Beirut.

More details:

<http://wam.ae/en/details/1395302600080>

6. ARABIAN PENINSULA AND THE GULF OF BASRA

- **King Salman meets muftis, calls on Muslims to unite against terrorism**

King Salman Abdulaziz Al Saud of Saudi Arabia today called on Muslims to stand united against terrorism and its threats worldwide. His Majesty, in a brief meeting with Malaysia's muftis at the St Regis Hotel this morning, also reminded Muslims to remain vigilant at all times in the face of such threats.

More Details

<http://www.nst.com.my/news/2017/02/216104/king-salman-meets-muftis-calls-muslims-unite-against-terrorism>

- **19 million Yemenis in need of relief aid: UN official**

The UN relief aid chief says 19 million out of Yemen's 26-million population are in pressing need of humanitarian assistance, warning that the impoverished country faces a "serious risk of famine."

More Details

<http://www.presstv.com/Detail/2017/02/28/512393/UN-Yemen-Saudi-Arabia>

- **Yemeni President and UN Emergency Relief Coordinator discuss relations**

President Abd Rabbu Mansour Hadi of the Republic of Yemen met with the visiting UN Emergency Relief Coordinator, Stephen O'Brien, in Aden yesterday. During the meeting, they discussed aspects of bilateral relations and ways to promote UN involvement, in humanitarian relief affairs, across the country.

More Details

<http://wam.ae/en/details/1395302600110>

- **Petrol and diesel prices to go up from tomorrow**

Prices of fuels including that of diesel will go up in Qatar from tomorrow, the Ministry of Energy and Industry announced yesterday.

More Details

<http://www.gulf-times.com/story/534638/Petrol-and-diesel-prices-to-go-up-from-tomorrow>

- **Your UAE job search starts here**

If you are searching for a job in Dubai, Abu Dhabi, or anywhere else in the UAE, then you are in for a good year. Nearly seven in 10 UAE employers (69%) are planning to hire this year. This is what the Bayt.com Middle East Job Index Survey revealed. Many employers in the UAE, and across the Middle East, are going to have many vacancies to fill. Getting a job in the UAE may be your next dream coming true.

More Details

<http://www.albawaba.com/business/your-uae-job-search-starts-here-943506>

- **COAS discusses Pak-UAE ties with Dubai ruler**

Chief of the Army Staff Qamar Javed Bajwa met United Arab Emirates' Vice-President and Prime Minister and Ruler of Dubai Shaikh Mohammad bin Rashid Al Maktoum at the Zabeel Palace in Dubai on Monday. General Bajwa and Sheikh Mohammad discussed relations between Pakistan and UAE and a number of issues pertaining to the military and the current situation in the region. Deputy Ruler of Dubai Shaikh Maktoum Bin Mohammad Bin Rashid Al Maktoum was also present during the meeting.

More Details

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/189280-COAS-discusses-Pak-UAE-ties-with-Dubai-ruler>

- **Emir to meet Bahrain's prime minister today**

Emir to meet Bahrain's prime minister today, HH the Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani will meet today at the Emiri Diwan Bahrain's Prime Minister Prince Khalifah bin Salman al-Khalifah to review fraternal relations between the two countries and means of enhancing them to serve the interests of both peoples. They will also discuss the latest developments in the region. Meanwhile, the Bahraini prime minister stressed the deep-rooted relations between the two countries as well as the path of bilateral co-operation.

More Details

<http://www.gulf-times.com/story/534636/Emir-to-meet-Bahrain-s-prime-minister-today>

- **Sheikh Saif inspects UAE forces in Bahrain**

Sheikh Saif bin Zayed, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior, has inspected UAE forces in Bahrain where they are part of the Waves of the Gulf Duty Force. During his visit on Monday, he told troops they were representing the UAE in the best light, as they are the ambassadors of "righteousness, goodness and peace", reported state news agency Wam.

More Details

<http://www.thenational.ae/uae/sheikh-saif-inspects-uae-forces-in-bahrain>

- **Oman progressing well on way to becoming major logistics hub**

With the logistics sector in Oman growing, the Sultanate is slowly transforming itself into a major industrial and logistics centre for the region and beyond, according to an expert. "The Sultanate is ideally placed to play a leading role in logistics," said Jayantha Liyanagamage, CEO and President of Jay's Club Intl Logistics Organisation (JCiLO).

More Details

<http://timesofoman.com/article/103827/Oman/Transport/Oman-progressing-well-on-way-to-becoming-major-logistics-hub>

7. EGYPT

- **Islamic State bolsters hold on north Sinai as army pulls back**

In the past three days, Islamic State fighters in Egypt's volatile northern Sinai region abducted four men accused of collaborating with the government, three of them during a brazen raid in the middle of a public market.

More Details

<http://www.timesofisrael.com/islamic-state-bolsters-hold-on-north-sinai-as-army-pulls-back/>

- **Jailed Muslim Brotherhood spokesman put in disciplinary cell over New York Times article – mother**

The mother of the spokesman for Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood group said that the administration of the notorious Al-New(scorpion) Prison has transferred her son from the prison cell where he had

been held to a disciplinary cell, as a punishment over an article he recently wrote in jail for the New York Times newspaper. Gehad El-Haddad was arrested in Cairo, Egypt in September, 2013, in the wake of the July 2013 military ouster of former president Mohamed Morsi, the country's first democratically-elected civilian president who also hails from the Muslim Brotherhood.

More Details

<https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20170228-jailed-muslim-brotherhood-spokesman-put-in-disciplinary-cell-over-new-york-times-article-mother/>

- **Honeywell showcases its latest connected technology at EGYPS**

Leading global technology company Honeywell was set to showcase a wide variety of the latest connected technology offerings at the Egypt Petroleum Show (EGYPS) 2017—held under the auspices of President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi—that was held at the Cairo International Convention Centre from 14-16 February.

More Details

<http://www.dailynewsegypt.com/2017/02/28/honeywell-showcases-latest-connected-technology-egypt/>

- **Egypt Parliament Removes Prominent Dissenter: Anwar Sadat's Nephew**

Egypt's Parliament on Monday expelled one of its few dissenting lawmakers, the scion of a storied political family, having accused him of leaking sensitive information to Western diplomats.

More Details

<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/02/27/world/middleeast/egypt-sadat-sisi.html>

- **Egyptian MP expelled after criticising parliament**

A two-thirds majority of Egyptian lawmakers on Monday voted to strip a prominent MP of membership over accusations of leaking information concerning domestic conditions to international institutions.

More Details

<https://www.alaraby.co.uk/english/news/2017/2/28/egyptian-mp-expelled-after-criticising-parliament>

- **'Gaza war in 2014 Caused by Egyptian Regime Change, Palestinian Arrests'**

A former senior security cabinet minister said the change of leadership in Egypt and the widespread re-arrest of Palestinians released by the Gilad Shalit deal and hundreds of others in the West Bank during the search for three Israeli teenagers kidnapped by Hamas were some of the reasons behind the 2014 war between Israel and Hamas in the Gaza Strip.

More Details

<http://www.jpost.com/Arab-Israeli-Conflict/Gaza-war-in-2014-caused-by-Egyptian-regime-change-Palestinian-arrests-482764>

- **Egypt's parliament expels lawmaker critical of human rights record**

Egypt's parliament on Monday kicked out a prominent legislator with a reputation for being critical of the government because he allegedly "belittled" the assembly in correspondence with foreign organizations. Mohamed Anwar al-Sadat, the nephew of late President Anwar al-Sadat, was also accused of forging lawmaker' signatures on a draft bill. He denies the accusation.

More Details

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-egypt-politics-idUSKBN16628N?rpc=401&>

- **Egypt launches Ministers' Council on Social Affairs to discuss terrorism**

Prime Minister Sherif Ismail launched a conference on Monday, sponsored by the presidency. The Ministers' Council on Social Affairs' topic is "Causes and Treatments" and is set to address terrorism and social development with the attendance of Arab delegations, according to a cabinet statement on Monday.

More Details

<http://www.dailynewsegypt.com/2017/02/27/616552/>

- **Egypt to receive first shipment from Iraqi oil deal in March: Ambassador**

Iraq is expected to deliver in March the first oil shipment to Egypt as part of a one-year agreement reached by the two countries in late 2016, Iraqi Ambassador to Cairo Habib Al-Sadr said on Monday. In an interview with Al-Ahram daily newspaper, Al-Sadr said the first batch, set at one million barrels per month, would be delivered at the end of March 2017, adding that the deal should bridge the gap between oil production and consumption in Egypt.

More Details

<http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/3/12/258987/-.aspx>

8. NORTH AFRICA

- **UGTA sends loyalty and support message to President Bouteflika**

The General Union of Algerian Workers (UGTA) reaffirmed its loyalty and trust in President of the Republic Abdelaziz Bouteflika, and expressed its deep gratitude to all he has done for Algeria.

More Details:

<http://en.aps.dz/algeria/17009-ugta-sends-loyalty-and-support-message-to-president-bouteflika>

- **Nigeria, Algeria, others lost \$1tn to oil crash – OPEC**

Nigeria, Algeria and other members of the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries lost a cumulative revenue of about \$1tn as a result of the crash in crude oil prices, the Secretary-General of OPEC, Mohammed Barkindo, has said.

More Details:

<http://punchng.com/nigeria-algeria-others-lost-1tn-to-oil-crash-opec/>

- **Qatari Emir hails Algeria's role in stability of Arab, Muslim countries**

Emir of Qatar Sheikh Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani hailed Monday, in Doha (Qatar), in an audience he granted to the Speaker of the People's National Assembly (Lower House of Parliament) Mohamed Larbi Ould Khelifa, Algeria's constructive role in the stability of Arab and Muslim countries such as Libya and Mali, said the Lower House in a communiqué.

More Details:

<http://en.aps.dz/algeria/17017-qatari-emir-hails-algeria%E2%80%99s-role-in-stability-of-arab,-muslim-countries>

- **Morocco explores new markets to boost stagnant tourism**

Morocco's key tourism sector barely grew last year amid security challenges, but operators are hoping Chinese and Russian visitors will boost their fortunes in the coming years.

More Details:

<http://www.arabnews.com/node/1060721/business-economy>

- **WTO panel to look into Turkish concerns over Morocco's HRC import duties**

The World Trade Organization (WTO) Dispute Settlement Body (DSB) is to investigate Turkish concerns over anti-dumping duties imposed by Morocco on imports of hot rolled coil (HRC).

More Details:

<https://www.metalbulletin.com/Article/3665045/Latest-news/WTO-panel-to-look-into-Turkish-concerns-over-Moroccos-HRC-import-duties.html>

- **Minister of Foreign Affairs meets with Libya's PM Fayez el-Sarraj in Geneva**

President Beji Caïd Essebsi's initiative on Libya was at the centre of a meeting held Sunday evening in Geneva between Minister of Foreign Affairs Khemaies Jhinaoui and Prime Minister of the Libyan Government of National Accord, Fayez el-Sarraj.

More Details:

<https://www.tap.info.tn/en/Portal-Top-Slide-EN/8757559-minister-of-foreign>

- **Tunisia's security improvements remain relative, says senior military figure**

Tunisia's security situation has significantly improved, but such gains remain relative, a former Tunisian brigadier-general has told The New Arab.

More Details:

<https://www.alaraby.co.uk/english/indepth/2017/2/27/tunisias-security-improvements-remain-relative-says-senior-military-figure>

- **Tunisia to sell shares in three state banks and layoff 10,000 employees**

Tunisia's minister of finance said on Sunday that the government is likely to sell shares in three state-owned banks and layoff at least 10,000 public sector employees this year as part of reforms demanded by the International Monetary Fund.

More Details:

<https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20170227-tunisia-to-sell-shares-in-three-state-banks-and-layoff-10000-employees/>

- **NGO rescues off Libya encourage traffickers, says EU borders chief**

NGOs who rescue people in the sea off Libya are encouraging traffickers who profit from dangerous Mediterranean crossings, the head of the EU border agency Frontex has said.

More Details:

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/feb/27/ngo-rescues-off-libya-encourage-traffickers-eu-borders-chief>

- **Islamic State forced Philippine nurses to give medical training in Libya**

A Philippine nurse held by Islamic State in the Libyan city of Sirte said on Monday that she and her colleagues had been forced to treat militants and give them medical training.

More Details:

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-libya-security-prisoners-idUSKBN1662KR?rpc=401&>

9. AFGHANISTAN – PAKISTAN

- **4 Taliban dead, key areas recaptured in Takhar**

Four Taliban insurgents were killed and some areas recaptured during an operation in the Darqad district of northeastern Takhar province, an official said on Tuesday.

More Details:

<http://www.pajhwok.com/en/2017/02/28/4-taliban-dead-key-areas-recaptured-takhar>

- **Russia seeks to strengthen Tajik-Afghan border**

Russian President Vladimir Putin during his visit to Dushanbe ordered the relevant bodies to strengthen the Tajik-Afghan border, the First Vice Prime Minister of Russia Igor Shuvalov told journalists, RIA Novosti reports.

More Details:

<http://akipress.com/news:589446/>

- **12 police killed in southern Afghan province**

Some 12 police personnel were killed at a checkpoint in Helmand's provincial capital of Lashkar Gah on Tuesday, a security official said.

More Details:

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-02/28/c_136091346.htm

- **Imports from Afghanistan made easier**

The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) has made imports from Afghanistan easier by reducing the involvement of banks and making the procedure simple.

More Details:

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1317422/imports-from-afghanistan-made-easier>

- **Pakistan ambassador to Kabul summoned**

Ministry of Foreign Affairs summoned yesterday Pakistan Ambassador to Kabul Sayed Abrar Hussain.

More Details:

<http://thekabultimes.gov.af/index.php/newsnational/13181-pakistan-ambassador-to-kabul-summoned.html>

- **India will release 39 Pakistani prisoners as a goodwill gesture**

India will release 39 Pakistani prisoners currently in jails around the country as a goodwill gesture to Islamabad, The Times of India reported on Tuesday. The prisoners who will be released include 21 who have served out their sentences and 18 fishermen, according to the report.

More Details:

<https://scroll.in/latest/830478/india-will-release-39-pakistani-prisoners-as-a-goodwill-gesture>

- **Auditor General of Pakistan visits China**

The Auditor General of China Liu Jiayi met with his Pakistani counterpart Rana Assad Amin to discuss further enhancing exchanges in audit domain between the two countries in Beijing on Feb. 27, 2017.

More Details:

http://www.china.org.cn/world/2017-02/28/content_40375526.htm

- **Pakistan deploys extra police ahead of regional summit**

Pakistan's interior ministry says it has deployed extra police forces and paramilitary units to boost security in the country's capital ahead of a regional summit on economic cooperation.

More Details:

http://www.seattletimes.com/business/pakistan-deploys-extra-police-ahead-of-regional-summit/?utm_source=RSS&utm_medium=Referral&utm_campaign=RSS_business

- **Japan sees Pakistan as next destination for investors**

Embassy of Japan First Secretary Katsunori Ashida on Monday visited Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) and said Pakistan could be the next destination for Japanese investors due to its low labour cost and potential market for business.

More Details:

<http://nation.com.pk/business/28-Feb-2017/japan-sees-pakistan-as-next-destination-for-investors>

- **Pakistan to sign agreement with Azerbaijan to facilitate oil, gas import**

Pakistan and Azerbaijan will sign an inter-governmental agreement (IGA) to facilitate import of oil and gas products from the former Soviet nation after arrival of President Ilham Eliyev on Tuesday, said Petroleum Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi.

More Details:

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1317418/pakistan-to-sign-agreement-with-azerbaijan-to-facilitate-oil-gas-import>

10.TURKEY AND THE MIDDLE EAST

- **US admiral praises Turkey's role in fighting Daesh**

The commander of a U.S. aircraft carrier strike group conducting missions against Daesh has described to Anadolu Agency the importance of Turkey's involvement in fighting the terrorist group in Syria and northern Iraq. Speaking onboard the USS H.W. Bush aircraft carrier on Monday, Rear Admiral Kenneth Whitesell said: "We can't do this now without Turkey's cooperation and friendship. You are very important for us to be able to do our mission."

More Details:

<http://aa.com.tr/en/americas/us-admiral-praises-turkeys-role-in-fighting-daesh/760311>

- **Turkish PM, Barzani discuss anti-terror steps**

Prime Minister Binali Yıldırım met Iraq's Kurdish Regional Government President Masoud Barzani at Cankaya Palace, Ankara on Monday. Economic ties and fighting terrorism were the main topics in the meeting, Prime Ministry sources told Anadolu Agency. Ankara has taken an active role in the international fight against Daesh in both Iraq and Syria. Turkish troops provide training to local fighters in Bashiqa, northeast of the Iraqi city of Mosul.

More Details:

<http://www.yenisafak.com/en/world/turkish-pm-barzani-discuss-anti-terror-steps-2620806>

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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