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The Last Thing to Read this Week

by

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Kingdom of Bahrain

Sunday, 27 January—Bahrain elected Ahdeya Ahmad, a well-known Bahraini media personality and deputy editor-in-chief of the Daily Tribune, Bahrain's daily newspaper published in English, as the first woman to head the Bahrain Journalists Association (BJA).

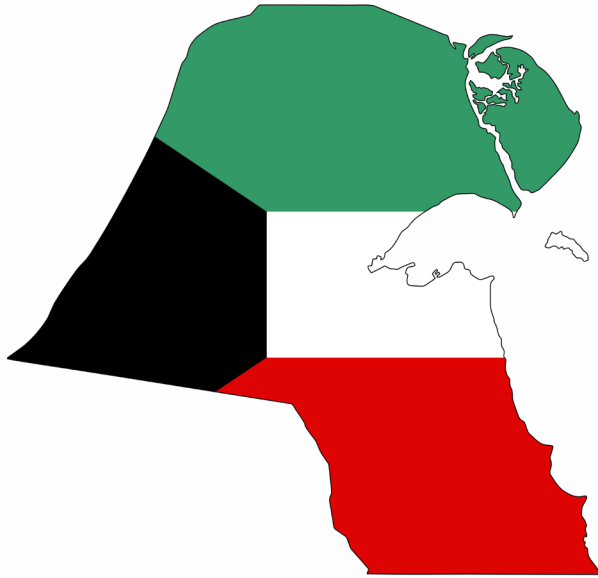
Thursday, 31 January—Foreign Ministers of Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Egypt, Kuwait, Bahrain and Jordan held a two-day informal consultative meeting at the King Hussein Bin Talal Convention Centre at the Dead Sea. The Ministers exchanged views on numerous regional challenges and discussed ways how to enhance cooperation and coordination to achieve security and stability. Prior to the meeting, Jordan's King Abdullah II received separately the countries' Foreign Ministers for talks.





State of Kuwait

Monday, 28 January—Kuwait celebrated the 13th anniversary of the reign of Amir Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.



Tuesday, 29 January—Kuwait's First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defence, Nasser bin Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, travelled to Abu Dhabi to meet with the Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces, Mohamed bin Zayed Al-Nahyan. They discussed bilateral relations and ways to enhance them, particularly in security and military fields. The meeting was also attended by the UAE's Minister of State for Defence Affairs, Mohammed bin Ahmed Al-Bowardi; Chief of Staff of UAE Armed Forces, Lieutenant-General Hamad Mohammed Thani Al-Rumaithi; and Deputy Chief of Staff of the Kuwaiti Army, Lieutenant-General Abdullah Al-Nawaf Al-Sabah, among other officials.



Sultanate of Oman

Sunday, 27 January—Italy's Prime Minister, Giuseppe Conte, and his accompanying delegation were received by Oman's Deputy Prime Minister for the Council of Ministers, Sayyid Fahd bin Mahmood Al-Said, in the presence of Oman's Minister Responsible for Foreign Affairs, Yusuf bin Alawi bin Abdallah, and Oil and Gas Minister, Dr Mohamed bin Hamad Al-Rumhy. They discussed ways to enhance bilateral cooperation between Oman and Italy in various fields and regional and international issues of common concern.

Tuesday, 29 January—Pakistan's Foreign Minister, Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi, arrived with his accompanying delegation on a three-day visit to Oman to promote enhancing of bilateral cooperation between the two countries. Mr Qureshi and his Omani counterpart, Yusuf bin Alawi bin Abdallah, co-chaired the 7th Session of the Oman-Pakistan Joint Committee, where they focused on bolstering cooperation, particularly in economy and investments.





State of Qatar

Tuesday, 29 January—The Qatar-Turkey Joint Security Committee held its fourth meeting in Ankara to activate mechanisms of joint cooperation, particularly in the fight against terrorism, organised crime, and drug trafficking; as well as in aviation, cyber and border security. The Qatari delegation, led by Major General Engineer Abdul Aziz Abdullah Al-Ansari, Director of International Cooperation Department at the Interior Ministry, agreed with its Turkish counterparts on opening new communication channels between them.

Wednesday, 30 January—Qatar's Emir, Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, travelled to Tokyo, where he met with Japan's Emperor Akihito and the Crown Prince Naruhito. They reviewed bilateral relations and co-

operation between Qatar and Japan and ways to enhance them. On the occasion, the Qatar-Japan Business Forum was organised. Qatar's Minister of Commerce and Industry, Ali bin Ahmed Al-Kuwari, highlighted during the Forum his country's keenness to develop cooperation with Japan particularly in renewable energy, industry, high technology and innovation, and Small and Medium Enterprise (SME) sector.

Thursday, 31 January—From Japan, Qatar's Emir, Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, continued to China to strengthen cooper-

ation and strategic partnership with Beijing. The Emir was welcomed by Chinese President, Xi Jinping, with whom they discussed bilateral relations, investments and regional issues. The two leaders witnessed signing of several agreements and Memoranda of Understanding, including on: establishing a strategic dialogue mechanism, drafting the Qatari-Chinese implementation plan of the Belt and Road Initiative, promotion of cooperation in infrastructure, diplomatic training, establishing a friendship committee, and others.



Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Monday, 28 January—Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince, Mohammed bin Salman, officially inaugurated the National Industrial Development and Logistics Programme—an ambitious initiative, which envisages attracting over \$450 billion in private investments by 2030, generating new opportunities and diversifying the Kingdom's economy in line with the Kingdom's Vision 2030. The Programme offers investment opportunities in industry, mining, logistics and energy. On the occasion, deals for more than \$50 billion were signed.

Monday, 28 January—Saudi Aramco reportedly plans to acquire up to 19.9% of Hyundai Oilbank, a South Korean petroleum and refinery company, for approximately \$1.6 billion. Aramco will buy the stake from Hyundai Heavy Industries Holdings, which now owns some 91% of the company.

fund, the Public Investment Fund.

Wednesday, 30 January—Saudi Arabia's Royal Court announced that the Kingdom's Anti-Corruption Committee, established in November 2017 and chaired by Crown Prince, Mohammed bin Salman, concluded its tasks. It stated that of 381 individuals that were summoned, 87 confessed to corruption and agreed to settle, 56 were denied settlement by the Public Prosecutor due to existing crimi-



Tuesday, 29 January—Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince, Mohammed bin Salman, held a phone conversation with the UN Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres, on the progress in Yemen peace process and other regional issues.

Tuesday, 29 January—Saudi Arabia set up a legal entity to develop the \$500 billion NEOM megaproject. The NEOM company, headed by Nadhmi Al-Nasr, will be entirely owned by the Kingdom's wealth

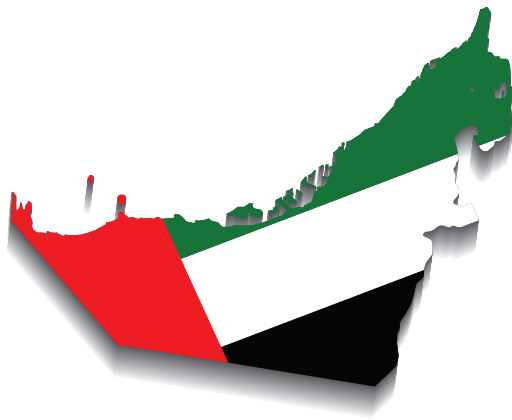


nal charges against them, and 8 refused to settle and will be tried. As a result of the anti-corruption campaign, over SR400 billion (approximately \$106.6 billion) were reportedly recovered in cash, property and other assets.



United Arab Emirates

Sunday, 27 January—Italy's oil giant, Eni, and Austria's oil and gas company, OMV, partnered to acquire a \$5.8 billion stake in Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC) Refining. Larger part of the deal should be paid by Eni, which plans to buy a 20% stake in ADNOC Refining for approximately \$3.3 billion, while OMV would buy 15% for \$2.5 billion. This step is in line with Eni's recent expansion in the Arabian Gulf, it will also allow ADNOC to access Europe's market, and OMV, in turn, to own a non-European downstream oil business as it already owns some upstream ones in the UAE.



Thursday, 31 January—The Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces, Mohamed bin Zayed Al-Nahyan, received Nikolai Platonovich Patrushev, the Director of the Russian Federal Security Service, to discuss several issues of common concern and the strengthening of cooperation and partnership between Russia and the UAE.



The Arabian Gulf is rapidly becoming a geopolitical pivot. As a result, it is important to understand the internal and international dynamics unfolding in the region and the countries that compose it. We at EGIC are proud to present “The Last Thing to Read this Week” segment which contains a small, carefully selected, batch of the most important events unfolding in the countries of the Arab Gulf to help you map the region’s trends.

