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The Last Thing to Read this Week

by

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Kingdom of Bahrain



TUESDAY, 6 MARCH—The Commander-in-Chief of the Bahrain Defence Force (BDF), Field Marshal Shaikh Khalifa bin Ahmed Al-Khalifa, received a Pakistani military delegation led by, Rear Admiral Yusef Ahmed Malallah. The meeting took place within the framework of the Islamic Military Counter Terrorism Coalition (IMCTC) and paves the way for closer Bahrain-Pakistan military cooperation.

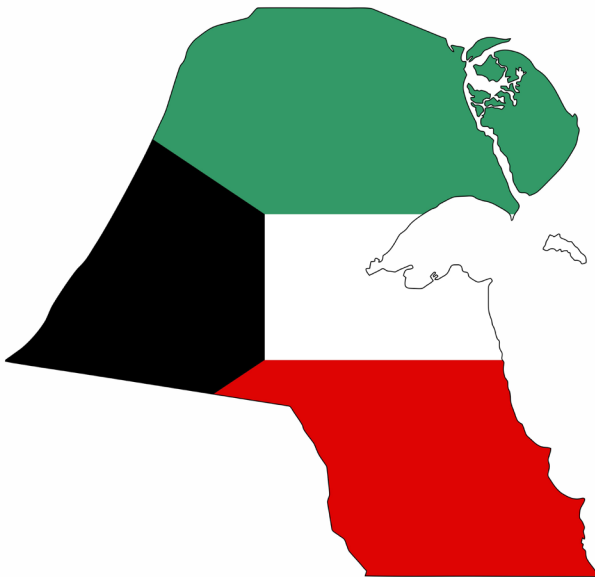
WEDNESDAY, 7 MARCH—Bahrain's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Shaikh Khalid bin Ahmed bin Mohammed Al-Khalifa, was the first Foreign Minister to sign the Statute of the Arab Court for Human Rights along with Arab League Secretary-General, Ahmed Aboul Gheit. The establishment of an Arab court for human rights stemmed from the initiative of Bahrain's King Hamad bin Isa Al-Khalifa. Bahrain then submitted such proposal to the Arab League.



State of Kuwait

SUNDAY, 4 MARCH—Kuwait's Red Crescent Society (KRCS) denounced Syria's government forces which confiscated food parcels and medical aid destined to besieged Syrians in Eastern Ghouta. Kuwait's delegation to the UN vehemently protested against such actions.

THURSDAY, 8 MARCH—Kuwait requested Lebanon to provide extradition for the Lebanese man and his Syrian wife accused of murdering their Filipina housemaid, Joanna Demafelis, in the Gulf state. The murder triggered a major diplomatic crisis between Kuwait and the Philippines.





Sultanate of Oman



TUESDAY, 6 MARCH—Oman's Sultan Qaboos bin Said, received a written message from Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmed Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Emir of Kuwait. The message hailed the good bilateral relations between the two Gulf countries. Oman and Kuwait are both attempting to mediate the ongoing diplomatic crisis between Qatar on one side and Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Egypt and the UAE on the other.

WEDNESDAY, 7 MARCH—Majid Al-Amri, founder of Thawani Technologies, announced the launch of Oman's first comprehensive e-payment platform which expected to revolutionise the way Oman's banking and financial sectors work.



State of Qatar



TUESDAY, 6 MARCH—Qatar’s Emir, Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani, started his official visit to Brussels, Belgium. The Emir met Belgium’s Prime Minister, Charles Michel, NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg, and the President of the European Commission, Jean-Claude Juncker. Qatar is attempting to attract support from the EU, though the EU has pledged, several times, its neutrality on the Gulf Crisis.

WEDNESDAY, 7 MARCH—The CEO of Qatar Airways, Akbar Al-Baker, speaking at a travel fair in Berlin, announced that the company is suffering tremendous losses in the Qatari market place.

THURSDAY, 8 MARCH—Qatar’s Prime Minister and Interior Minister, Abdullah bin Nasser bin Khalifa Al-Thani, met, with Algeria’s Prime Minister Ahmed Ouyahia in Algiers. The two discussed the precarious security situation in Libya. Relations between the two countries have been increasingly friendly since 2016 on the back of emerging evidence linking Qatar Islamist insurgency in Libya’s southern sector.



Kingdom of Saudi Arabia



MONDAY, 5 MARCH—Saudi Arabia's Minister of Energy, Industry and Mineral Resources, Khalid Al-Falih, discussed crude prices with his Indian counterpart, Dharmendra Pradhan. Asia is now the largest buyer of crude oil from Saudi Aramco and the oil company wants to secure Asian markets for the long term as it faces competition from suppliers such as Russia and the United States.

MONDAY, 5 MARCH—Saudi Arabia and Egypt signed an investment agreement to develop more than 1,000 square kilometers of Egyptian lands in Southern Sinai. This is part of the project for the planned construction of the megacity of Neom.

WEDNESDAY, 6 MARCH—Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince, Mohammed bin Salman, during his visit to Egypt, affirmed that the relations between Egypt and Saudi Arabia are stronger than ever and warned against any attempt to sabotage KSA-Egypt synergy and friendship.

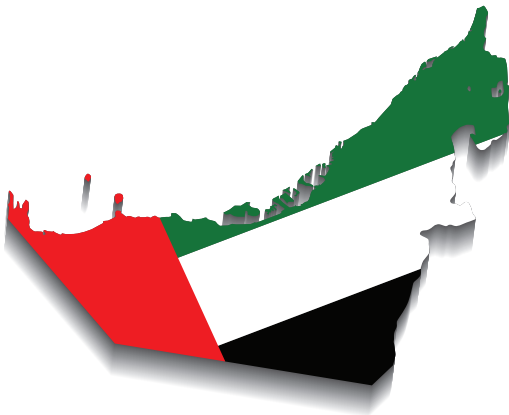
WEDNESDAY, 7 MARCH—Saudi Arabia's military forces arrived in Yemen's Hajjah front to support the advance of forces loyal to Yemen's UN-legitimised government against Iran-backed Houthi rebels. Capturing Hajjah would allow forces of the Arab coalition to attack the supply lines connecting the Houthi stronghold of Saada to Yemen's capital, Sana'a currently controlled by the rebels.

THURSDAY, 8 MARCH—Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince, Mohammed bin Salman, was received by the Prime Minister of the UK, Theresa May, in her Downing Street office in London. The British Prime Minister declared that Britain's links to its ally Saudi Arabia in the fields defence and security helped save the lives of hundreds of people. KSA-UK cooperation has proved particularly fruitful with regard to the fight against international jihadi terrorism.



United Arab Emirates

WEDNESDAY, 7 MARCH—The Arab Foreign Ministers' Council reaffirmed the UAE's sovereignty over the islands of Greater and Lesser Tunbs and Abu Musa, under occupation by Iran since 1971. In Addition, the Council strongly condemned a recent provocative move by Tehran involving the construction of housing units on the islands.



THURSDAY, 8 MARCH—The President of the UAE, Khalifa bin Zayed Al-Nahyan, authorised the delivery of an aid donation of 100 tonnes of food supplies to Mali. The food donation was provided by Emirates Red Crescent (ERC). An Emirati delegation monitored the distribution of the aid and assessed Mali's future humanitarian requirements.



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.