



# THE GCC BRIEFING

A Weekly Publication of the main news surrounding the GCC States

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26 March – 4 April 2017

## Bahrain

**Politics:** The US President Donald Trump plans to revive the contract for the sale of 19 Lockheed Martin F-16 aircrafts to Bahrain. The deal includes 23 engines, radars and aircrafts.

**Security:** On Sunday, as reported by the Associated Press, Bahrain authorities arrested 14 people who “are suspected of receiving overseas military training under the supervision of the Iranian revolutionary Guards and Hezbollah in Iraq.” The Police did not state if individuals attacked any officials in particular. The authorities believe the terrorists arrested were working under the leadership of Morthadha Majeed al-Sindi and Quassim Abdullah Ali.

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## Qatar

**Economy:** Qatar’s Ministry of Finance announced a plan to expand in the U.K and the U.S. The investment of Qatar’s sovereign wealth fund in the UK will be increased by 6.3 billion dollars. The investments will be in made in the areas of infrastructure, technology, healthcare and real estate in the next 3 to 5 years.

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## Saudi Arabia

**Politics:** Saudi Arabia is strengthening its ties to China. King Salman Bin Abdul Aziz visited China in March to close a series of deals amounting to 65 billion dollars. China signed a contract to build a drone factory in Saudi Arabia.

**Economy:** King Salman Bin Abdul Aziz signed 15 cooperation agreements for an investment fund in Jordan during his stay in Amman on 27 March. Contracts include: improvement in housing and health services, measures to boost power generation and mitigate water shortages. The investment will be as high as \$3 billion dollars.

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## UAE

**Economy:** Dubai: The UAE's Purchasing Managers Index (PMI) — a key indicator of business sentiment — hit a 19-month high of 56.2 during March. In February, the PMI was at 56. The last PMI survey aims at supporting the growth of non-oil economy and the important thing about the last report is the optimism of the local firms. Price data suggests the UAE's non-oil private sector has been facing intense market competition, as the vast majority of firms registered no change in output charges despite higher cost pressures.

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## Kuwait

**Politics:** Kuwait allowed people who are not recognized as citizens of the country to enroll in the military in order to tackle a shortage of troops. The Kuwait Ministry of Defense issued a statement prohibiting the sons of military personnel, who had been killed in service, are missing or have served in the army for 30 years, to enroll in the military.

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## Oman

**Society:** The Oman Shura Council is persistently trying to convince the government to allocate 200 liters of free fuel to low-income Omani families. The council wants to relieve those parts of society which have been affected by increased oil price the most.

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