



GCC IN REVIEW

A Weekly Publication of the main news surrounding the GCC States

17-21 July

Kingdom of Bahrain

Tuesday, 18 July—Forbes announced the inclusion of five Bahraini women in its power list. This signals the positive outcome of Bahrain’s effort to challenge gender related issues.

Wednesday, 19 July—Bahrain’s chief of terror crime prosecution, Advocate General Ahmed Al Hammadi, announced the beginning of a security crackdown against Hezbollah linked terrorist groups active in the Kingdom. The groups are allegedly planning acts of terrorism against Bahrain including targeting police and public order servicemen and participating in insurgent activities to undermine state security.

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Tuesday, 18 July—The US state department published a report on its official webpage, cited by Emirati media, in which it confirmed that Houthi militias were attacking Saudi Arabia’s southern territory with Iranian weapons, missiles in particular. The report added that Iran is continuing to supply the Houthis with weapons capable of threatening the security of navigation in the Red Sea.

Thursday, 20 July—Bahri, the National Shipping Company of Saudi Arabia, is expanding its fleet with the addition of ASLAF, a very large crude carrier, in a step that could promote its competitive capabilities. Through expanding and developing its services, Bahri is committed



to achieving Vision 2030 and opening new trade routes. It also aims to enhance Saudi's position as the regional gateway for three continents in fields of logistic services.

Friday, 21 July— A Royal Order was issued in Saudi Arabia to establish a state security presidium. The state security presidium includes the General Directorate of Investigation, the Special Security Forces, the Special Emergency Forces, Air security, General Directorate of Forensics, National Information Center and all related functions of the Presidency, including combating terrorism and its financing and financial investigations. Concerns of security of the State, including civil and military personnel, budgets, documents, and information will also be transferred to the new authority.

State of Kuwait

Thursday, 20 July—Kuwaiti authorities decided to shut down the cultural center attached to Iran's embassy in Kuwait City. In addition, Kuwait reduced the number of Iranian diplomats from XXX to 9. Such move follows the seizure of a variety of weapons, 204 grenades and electric detonators and the arrest of several suspects in 2015. A 2016 sentence, by a Kuwaiti appeals court, linked the arrested suspects to the Hezbollah terrorist organization and to Iran.

State of Qatar

Monday, 17 July— Sheikh Saif bin Ahmed Al Thani, director of Qatar's government communication office, declared that Qatari authorities possess evidence linking Abu Dhabi and senior Emirati officials to the hacking of the Qatari official news agency and social media sites.

Wednesday, 19 July—Qatar's Minister of State for Defense Affairs, Khalid bin Mohammed al-Attiyah, according to Turkey's TRT World, stated implicitly that Doha was compelled to join the Arab Coalition to restore legitimacy in Yemen.

Thursday, 20 July—The US State Department announced in its 2016 report on terrorism that Qatari financiers of terrorism are "still able to exploit the financial system in Doha to support terrorism, despite the signing of the US-Qatar memorandum to prevent terrorism financing".

Friday, 21 July—China's Foreign Minister, Wang Yi, during a meeting in Beijing with his Qatari counterpart, Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al-Thani, urged Doha to resolve the



diplomatic crisis through talks within the Gulf Cooperation Council. The Minister warned that the current crisis threatens the future of Chinese investments in Qatar.

Sultanate of Oman

Monday, 17 July—The Sultanate of Oman ranked third in the Arab region and 30th in the world on the global index of best countries for immigrants. The report, conducted by US News and World Report, specified the Sultanate's success in attracting productive migrants and producing remittances.

Wednesday, 19 July—Oman's Sultan Qaboos bin Said, received a phone call from US President Donald Trump. The two leaders discussed aspects of joint co-operation between the Sultanate of Oman and the United States of America. They also focused on latest developments in the Middle East, Oman's role in the Iran dossier, as well as on ways to solve the current GCC-Qatar crisis by encouraging dialogue and political settlement.

United Arab Emirates

Wednesday, 19 July—UAE Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Anwar al-Gargash, declared, that Qatar could not belong to the GCC if it decides to continue in its current course of action characterized by undermining regional security. The Minister added that the UAE would be willing to cooperate with Qatar once again if Doha changes its foreign policy behavior.

Thursday, 20 July—Etihad Airways has sold its minority stake in European regional carrier Darwin Airline, the first divestment since launching a strategic review last year. The Abu Dhabi based air company's new strategy could cause the reassessment of its investments in minority stakes in major European airlines such as Alitalia and Air Berlin.