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The Last Thing to Read this Week

by

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Kingdom of Bahrain



Tuesday, 20 March—Bahrain's Directorate General of Criminal Investigation and Forensic Science announced the arrest of 2 individuals - an Iranian and a Bahraini - for attempting to smuggle more than BD250,000 worth of narcotics from Iran into Bahrain. Iran harbours drugs, weapons and explosives smugglers active within Bahrain and connected to terrorist activities in the Kingdom.

Wednesday, 21 March—Bahrain's Chief of Public Security, Major-General Tariq Al-Hassan, received a delegation of the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF). Al-Hassan and the US visitors visited The King Hamad International Centre for Interreligious Dialogue and Peaceful Coexistence. The centre was launched in response to Bahrain's King Hamad bin Isa Al-Khalifa official declaration calling for religious tolerance and peaceful coexistence.

Thursday, 22 March—Bahrain's Prime Minister, Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al-Khalifa, contacted Afghanistan's President, Mohammed Ashraf Ghani, to condole the Afghan people who suffered yet another terrorist attack by the Taliban in Kabul. The Prime Minister vowed support to the Afghan government in the fight against all forms of terrorism.



State of Kuwait

Wednesday, 21 March—Kuwait's Directorate General of the Civil Aviation chief, Shaikh Salman Sabah Salem Al-Humoud Al-Sabah, announced a new Kuwait City airport with an estimated capacity of 25 million passengers a year. Al-Sabah forecasted a \$12 billion (USD) investment and the creation of 15,000 jobs in relation to the airport project.

Thursday, 22 March—A delegation from Kuwait's Red Crescent Society (KRCS) reached the Iraqi city of Mosul to deliver reconstruction and relief aid. Kuwait's government and civil society are leading international efforts to ensure post-Daesh reconstruction in neighbouring Iraq.





Sultanate of Oman



Sunday, 18 March—Oman's Minister of Social Development, Mohammed Al-Kalbani, announced the increase of the Ministry budget for social security payments to the citizens of the Sultanate. The recent increase in the price of crude oil is allowing Oman to increase investments on social security.

Monday, 19 March—Oman's Sultan Qaboos bin Said, sent a cable of congratulations to Russia's President, Vladimir Putin, on the occasion of him winning the presidential election for a new term.



State of Qatar



Sunday, 18 March—Qatar's Central Bank asked the US Treasury Department regulators to investigate First Abu Dhabi Bank (FAB) for engaging in foreign exchange deals intended to undermine the Qatari Riyal and harm Doha's economy. The Qatari Riyal suffered a severe devaluation since Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Egypt and the UAE started to boycott Doha in relation to Qatar's support for nefarious groups in the Middle East.

Wednesday, 21 March—Qatar's Ministry of Administrative Development, Labor and Social Affairs announced 3,798 job vacancies, 3,337 of which are in the governmental sector and 461 in the private sector. This figure signals how Qatar's economy is increasingly less attractive to foreign professionals.

Thursday, 22 March—Qatar's Foreign Ministry confirmed that the country's Emir Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani, will meet US President, Donald Trump, in April. Trump has yet to clarify whether he intends to take a leadership role in negotiating a solution to the ongoing



Kingdom of Saudi Arabia



Monday, 19 March—Saudi Arabia's Interior Minister, Prince Abdulaziz bin Saud bin Nayef Al-Saud, visited Qatif Province after he reiterated the Kingdom's efforts in maintaining community cohesion last week. The Eastern province is often infiltrated by Iranian and Al-Qaeda agents who commit and promote terrorist activities.

Tuesday, 20 March—The US Senate rejected a resolution seeking an end to US involvement in Yemen in support of the Saudi-led Arab coalition fighting to restore the UN-legitimised government in war-torn country.

Wednesday, 21 March—Saudi Arabia's Education Minister, Dr. Ahmed Al-Eissa, confirmed Crown Prince, Mohammed bin Salman's statement that the KSA government is fighting to eradicate the terrorist Muslim Brotherhood's ideology that invaded the education system in the Kingdom. Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince is spearheading efforts to de-radicalise state religion and education.

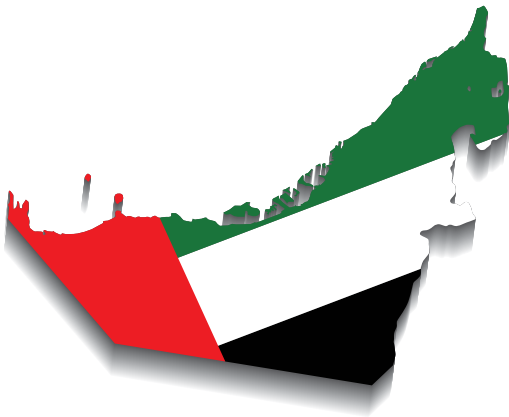
Wednesday, 21 March—Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince, Mohammed bin Salman's visit to the US, prompted the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Saudi Federation for Cybersecurity and Programming and Booz Allen Hamilton, a US company specialized in Cyber Security. This MoU is likely to enhance the localization of cyber security skills in national critical infrastructures and contribute to realizing the Kingdom's Vision 2030.

Thursday, 22 March—Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince, Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud, held talks with US President, Donald Trump, on strengthening the American-Saudi security relationship. In Particular, the two leaders discussed the threat the Iran-backed Houthis pose to the Arab Gulf and joint efforts to finalize new commercial deals that would support more than 120,000 American jobs and contribute to the success



United Arab Emirates

Monday, 19 March—UAE's First Abu Dhabi Bank denied that it had conducted transactions to manipulate the Qatari Riyals. The declaration came as a response to accusation from the Central Bank of Qatar.



Monday, 20 March—The UAE Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Anwar Mohammed Gargash, Declared that Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince visit to Washington carries special significance as it marks the strong political comeback of the Arab World against Turkish and Iranian regional interferences.



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.

