WHO Calls for Access to Yemen’s Besieged Taiz

SANA'A - The World Health Organization is appealing for access to Taiz, Yemen’s third largest city, which has been under siege for months amid a civil war between a Saudi-led coalition and Houthi rebels. The organization said in a Thursday statement that five military trucks have been prevented from entering the city since Dec. 14. It said the trucks carried humanitarian aid that urgently needed to be delivered to the besieged city.

Polish, EU Diplomats Meet over Disputed Media, Court Laws

WARSAW - Poland’s government sought on Thursday to quell an uproar over its plan to strengthen its state media and television and radio networks to invest in the state media and television and radio networks needed to provide information to the public.

Egypt Minister Suggests Uprising Anniversaries Protest Would Violate Islamic Law

CAIRO - Egypt’s minister of religious endowments has warned against protests during the anniversary of the uprising that ended President Hosni Mubarak’s rule, the state news agency reported, and suggested any unrest would violate Islamic law.

Rouhani says access to IS oil fields ‘in violation of international law’

IRAN - Iran accused Saudi Arabia of violating international law by attacking oil fields controlled by Islamic State group in a region that is of “paramount importance” to Tehran.

Syria Rebels Warns U.N. ‘Pressure’ will End Its Efforts to Supply Madaya

BAGHDAD - Foreign military and aid teams launched an assault on the Islamic State stronghold of Madaya, near the capital, a development that would allow humanitarian aid to be delivered to the blockaded town of Madaya, near the capital.

South Korea: North to Launch Missiles That Can Hit US

SEOUL - North Korea is planning to launch ballistic missiles that can hit the United States, a South Korean intelligence official said.

U.S. leads regional States in anti-drug campaign

WASHINGTON - The United States is leading a regional campaign to combat drug trafficking and other criminal activities, including the use of violence and corruption, in the Middle East.

Irish Foreign Minister says ‘pressure’ will begin this month

BRUSSELS - The European Union is to begin efforts to curb the funding of Islamic State terrorism networks, which are seen as a threat to the region.

WHO Calls for Access to Yemen’s Besieged Taiz

Raffaele Sanson, WHO’s emergencies director, said Thursday that humanitarian access to the war-ravaged city was a “priority” for the international community.

Pakistan Refrains Support to S. Arabia

ISLAMABAD - Pakistan has refrained from supporting Saudi Arabia, which is embroiled in a tangle with Iran, and the counter-terrorism coalition that Riyadh was leading.

Chanba seeks to court investment in Chabahar port

TEHRAN - Iran’s oil minister, Bijan Namdar Zanganeh, said on Thursday that his country was seeking foreign investment in its Chabahar port, which is located in the southern province of Sistan and Baluchestan.

China’s Central Bank to Maintain Prudent Monetary Policy

BEIJING - China’s central bank has said it will continue to maintain prudent monetary policy this year, with “full consideration of global financial environments and the country’s economic situation.”

Russian Warplanes Attack al-Muhandis in Iraq

TALAYA, Iraq - Russian warplanes attacked a helicopter of the Popular Mobilization Forces (PMF) in Interdisciplinary Center, a city in Iraq’s northwestern Nineveh Governorate, late last Thursday.

Italian soldiers killed in Yemeni war:

Rome and Riyadh on Thursday condemned the attack on the United Nations compound in Sanaa, Yemen, which killed two Italian soldiers, and the killing of 17 Islamic State (IS) militants in an airstrike during the fighting.

UN Condemns DPRK Nuclear Test

BRUSSELS - The European Union has condemned North Korea’s nuclear test and called for the country to refrain from further nuclear and missile tests.

Belgium Found Possible Paris Attacks Bomb Factory in December

BRUSSELS - Belgian forensic experts have been searching for six new explosives in the Rabat apartment that was rented under a fake name and where a fingerprint of a key fugitive was found.

Police found materials that could be used to make explosives, traces of explosive acetone peroxide and handbag belts during a raid on a house in Brussels.

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