

Headlines:

- **Trump to meet UAE, Saudi leaders to Resolve Qatar Crisis**
- **Why is Turkey Objecting to Natural Gas Drillings by Egypt and Cyprus in the Mediterranean?**
- **Pakistan Launches Naval Exercise as it aims to Counter India, Protect Economy**

Details:

Trump to meet UAE, Saudi leaders to Resolve Qatar Crisis

US President Donald Trump to meet senior Saudi, Emirati and Qatari leaders in the next couple of months, US officials said, amid efforts by Washington to try to resolve a dispute between the Gulf neighbours. His Royal Highness Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz, Saudi Crown Prince, Vice President of the Council of Ministers and Minister of Defense; His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces; and Qatari Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani are all planning to have bilateral visits with Trump in March and April, a senior U.S. official said. The agenda will include setting up a Gulf Cooperation Council summit, the official said, which Washington hopes will be held later this year, as well as Middle East peace and Iran. The UAE, along with Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and Egypt, cut off travel and trade ties with Qatar last June, accusing it of supporting terrorism and their arch-rival Iran. Doha denies the charges. Washington is hoping to lay the groundwork for a summit by the summer. "We would hope the dispute is resolved before the summit to allow maximum focus on other strategic concerns like Iran," another U.S. official said. [Source: Khaleej Times]

What type of leadership is this? They have given away oil and gas to the West, squanders billions in contracts to Western companies to build vertical buildings that are not needed, funded Western wars and now they will visit Trump so that he may pronounce judgement on them!?

Why is Turkey Objecting to Natural Gas Drillings by Egypt and Cyprus in the Mediterranean?

Turkey's objections to Egypt and Cyprus drilling for natural gas in the Eastern Mediterranean region have taken a number of political and military forms. In an interview with a Greek journalist on February 5, 2018, Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu stated that his country will not recognize the maritime demarcation agreement signed in 2013 that defined the economic zones of Egypt and Cyprus, in the gas-rich Eastern Mediterranean region. He claimed that the agreement infringes on the Turkish neritic zone which, according to claims by Ankara, extends between longitudes 32, 16 and 18 in the Eastern Mediterranean. His statements were rejected by Cairo, which - in a statement from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs - asserted that the border demarcation agreement between Egypt and Cyprus is not a matter of discussion because it conforms to international laws and was listed by the UN as an international agreement and that any infringement or violation of Egypt's sovereign rights in the region will not be tolerated. Cairo also responded militarily; marine vessels took up positions in the Eastern Mediterranean and around Zohr gas field as a part of the "Sinai 2018" anti-terror operation. This sent a straightforward warning message to Turkey and any other country that plans to infringe on Egyptian territorial waters or economic zones. Eni, the Italian gas drilling company, announced that its vessel had sailed to start excavating Block 3 in the Cypriot economic zone, but was ordered to stop by Turkish warships on February 9, 2018, on accounts of "military activities in the ship's destination". The incident is considered blatant aggression on Ankara's part and a violation of all international laws and conventions which stipulate that civilian vessels must not be subjected to military aggression, in addition to the fact that it includes Italy as one of the crisis's

parties since the ship belongs to an Italian company. On February 13, 2018, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan warned foreign gas drilling companies against involvement in the dispute between Turkey and Cyprus over Mediterranean gas drilling rights. He threatened to intercept and prevent foreign vessels from drilling in the disputed areas, which he did with an Eni ship off the coast of Cyprus. The incident forced Europe to call on Ankara to maintain good relations with its neighbors and to respect their territorial sovereignty. Donald Tusk, president of the European Council, even had a phone call with Nicos Anastasiades, president of Cyprus, to discuss the situation and warned Turkey against any moves that threaten EU members, which intensified the conflict between Ankara and the EU, an especially pertinent point when considering Turkey's pending application to join the union. Turkey is a trading nation whose population is estimated at about 81 million citizens. Because of the scale of its market, the country is continuously in need of new energy resources. This could be part of the reason why the Zohr gas field, discovered by the Italian company Eni and inaugurated by Egypt, is of such high concern to Turkey. Adding fuel to the fire, Eni will start drilling in 11 new zones within Egyptian territorial waters soon and George Lakkotrypis, Cypriot minister of Energy, announced the discovery of a new gas field in Cyprus' territorial waters. [Source: EgyptToday]

Rather than fight each other, why don't both Egypt and Turkey liberate Cyprus and annex to Turkey. This way both Egypt and Turkey as well as the Muslim Ummah can benefit from the gas resources.

Pakistan Launches Naval Exercise as it aims to Counter India, Protect Economy

Pakistan's Navy kicked off a major exercise Saturday as it tries to modernize and expand to counter growing Indian naval power, as well as protect its maritime economy and trade links. Exercise Ribat aims to validate the Navy's "war-fighting concepts under evolving multifaceted threats ranging from conventional to subconventional warfare," and it involves enhancing cooperation with the Air Force "at extended ranges into the Arabian Sea," according to a military news release. It culminates on March 6 with a live-fire exercise. Analyst, author and former Australian defense attache to Islamabad Brian Cloughley says "subconventional warfare" likely refers to "counterterrorism, etc. — anything, really, below the classic battlefield." New missile/patrol boats are therefore being sought to protect Pakistan's growing maritime economy and trade links, upon which it has pinned hopes of economic revival, with China and Turkey vying to supply these. However, neither the Ministry of Defence Production nor the Navy clarified the status of acquisition efforts when asked. Regarding what more could be done to improve capabilities in this respect, whether simply acquiring more patrol assets or also leveraging technology such as unmanned aerial and surface vehicles, Cloughley believes the Navy is "certainly concentrating on inshore patrol vessels." However, he wondered about further planned developments for the Pakistan Coast Guards. He believes unmanned technology is important, but does not think the government would "publicize intentions." Commercial satellite imagery has revealed China's Wing Loong medium-altitude, long-endurance UAV undergoing testing in Pakistan, but nothing further is yet known except capabilities in marketing literature. Conventionally vis-a-vis India, Pakistan's Navy is in desperate need of modernization and expansion. Kamal Alam, visiting fellow and Pakistan analyst at the British think tank Royal United Services Institute, said that during past conflicts the Navy played a "very minimal role against India," historically being the "weakest of the three services." "However, over the last five years this is changing as China ramps up its support with the largest defense deal in their history in the shape of submarines" and as the Navy transitions from a "defensive force into an offensive one." Nevertheless, air support "is key to any naval operations against India," he added. Warships aside, India boasts numerous anti-ship missile-equipped aircraft including Harpoon-equipped Jaguars and supersonic Brahmos-equipped Su-30MKI Flankers that have enormous range. Pakistan's Navy has limited defenses against Brahmos. [Source: Defense News]

India's navy is growing because it is driven by the desire to project power beyond the Arabian Sea. Unless, Pakistan changes its defensive posture its navy will be unable to compete with India.