

Saudi Arabia welcomes decision by Qatar, Bahrain to resume diplomatic ties

RIYADH: Saudi Arabia welcomes the decision by Qatar and Bahrain to resume diplomatic ties between the two countries, the Kingdom's foreign ministry said on Thursday.

On Wednesday, the Bahraini-Qatari Follow-up Committee held its second meeting at the headquarters of the Gulf Cooperation Council General Secretariat in Riyadh where the decision was made.

The ministry commended the positive step and said it confirms the strength of relations between GCC countries.

Houthi self-contradiction delays signing of peace pact

AL-MUKALLA: The Iran-backed Houthis have made additional demands in order to accept Saudi peace mediation, including an agreement between the militia and Saudi Arabia, dashing expectations of striking a peace deal to end the war in Yemen before the conclusion of Ramadan.

Heavy rains in Iran trigger flash floods, killing at least 2

TEHRAN: Heavy rains have triggered flash flooding in northern and western Iran, killing at least two people, Iranian state television reported Thursday.

According to Pirhossein Koulivand, the head of the country's emergency services, one fatality was reported in Qazvin province and the other in Ilam province in the past 24 hours, the state TV said. Koulivand also reported a third fatality, in West Azerbaijan province, where a person died from a lightning strike.

Israeli restrictions on Orthodox church crowds in Jerusalem for Easter spark outrage

RAMALLAH: Israeli police will curb the number of worshippers in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem during Orthodox Easter ceremonies on Saturday, drawing anger from church leaders who said they would not cooperate.

The decision to limit access on Saturday to the Holy Fire, the most important Easter celebration for the Eastern Orthodox Church, angered church leaders who see it as part of what they consider long-standing efforts by Israel to restrict the rights and freedoms of the local Christian community.

Lebanon judge to lift travel ban on central bank chief: judicial officials

BEIRUT: A Lebanese judge will lift a travel ban imposed on the country's embattled central bank chief, who has been summoned for a hearing in Paris next month, two judicial officials said Wednesday.

Riad Salameh is part of a political class widely blamed for Lebanon's unprecedented economic crisis that the World Bank says is of a scale usually associated with wars.