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"Syria, the cradle of civilization and the gateway to history."

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Damascus Tying the Trade Knot with Baghdad



Having gone through a series of ups and downs over the past decade and a half, Syrian-Iraqi relations are experiencing a definite upturn of late. In the past few years, the heaviest traffic along Syria's border with Iraq has been a human one, with more than 1.5m Iraqis seeking sanctuary over the border. However, that seems set to change, with ties between Damascus and Baghdad thawing and trade set to soar. On March 16, Amer Hosni Lutfi, Syria's minister of economy, met with Fawzi Francois Hariri, the Iraqi minister of industry and minerals, to discuss the need to increase trade links between the two countries. Apart from agreeing to promote joint investments in the textile and agriculture sectors, the talks focused on the possibility for opening the Syrian ports of Latakia and Tartus for both Iraqi imports and as an export outlet. Evidence of Syria's link to Iraq is the oil pipeline running from the Kirkuk fields in the north of Iraq to the Syrian port of Baniyas on the Mediterranean. The pipeline was put out of action in the early days of the 2003 US-led invasion and none of the bomb or corrosion damage it suffered has been repaired since. However, on March 26, Russian energy firm Stroytransgaz announced it had signed a deal with Iraq to reactivate the pipeline, which has the capacity to carry 300,000 barrels per day (bpd). To read more please click [here](#).

Archeological Discoveries in Al-Raqqa by American Team



Al-Raqqa, northeast Syria (SANA) – The American archeological expedition working at Tal al-Suwaihat site west of al-Raqqa uncovered new sections of the temple that had been discovered over the pass few years which dates back to 3000 BC. Director of al-Raqqa Archeology Department Anas al-Khabour said that the expedition had been working at the site since 1970, their most important discovery being the temple, mass graves and a clay sculpture of a bridled horse, which is the oldest discovered piece depicting a horse with a bridle. The Tal al-Suwaihat was an administrative, economic and trade center for the Ebla Kingdom according to cuneiform tablets found near the central Syrian city of Homs. The tablets show that the governor of this center married the daughter of the King of Ebla.

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