Egypt leader calls Gulf rulers after purported leaked tape

**CAIRO**   — Egypt's President Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi has made series of calls to Arab Gulf leaders after audio recordings surfaced in which he and a top aide purportedly mock them and discuss milking them for money.

Egyptian Prime Minister Ibrahim Mehleb told the Saudi-owned al-Hayat newspaper Tuesday that the recordings released by an Islamist TV station on Saturday are "fake." He accused the Muslim Brotherhood group of ousted President Mohammed Morsi of fabricating the recordings in order to "drive a wedge" between Egypt and its Gulf patrons.

A presidential statement says el-Sissi has called Kuwaiti, Saudi, Bahraini and Emirati leaders. It says he praised their "wisdom" and said "relations won't be undermined by nefarious attempts."

Gulf nations have provided several billion dollars in aid to Egypt since el-Sissi overthrew Morsi in 2013.