

MEI Weekly.



Officials from various Arab states being welcomed during a ceremony, in this photo provided by the Qatari Government, as they attend the Mecca Summit, where issues such as Iran's rising regional influence and Gulf unity were discussed.

CALENDAR: UPCOMING INSTITUTE EVENTS

Arab Culture and Cuisine

Arabic food is steeped in culture and history. In the latest of our MEI Salon series of events, we delve into the Arabic table and add an extra ingredient. Join us on June 11 at our talk by Ms Zeinab Hendawi of the Centre for Language Studies at the National University of Singapore, and try your hand at whipping up some dishes, too! Sign up here.



WHAT'S NEWS: THE BIG HEADLINES THIS WEEK

Qatar Backtracks on Arab Summit

Qatar voiced its displeasure at the outcome of the Mecca summit, citing how its input was not taken into account in the final statement and saying it had reservations about the meeting's hard line statements on Iran.



The recent cancellation of the Algerian presidential election is seen by Algerians as the first of many steps that will lead towards a brighter future.

Algerian Presidential Election Cancelled

Taking to the streets, protesters in Algeria demanded the cancellation of the July 4 presidential elections, which were widely viewed as illegitimate due to alleged interference by the Algerian military. After 15 weeks, demonstrators finally prevailed, and Algeria's Constitutional Council cancelled the election.

Netanyahu Appoints New Justice Minister

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's appointment of Amir Ohana as Justice Minister comes amidst impending corruption charges against him. Mr Ohana has been known to support legislation that would grant legal immunity to Mr Netanyahu, thus preventing the state from taking action against him if he is found guilty of corruption in an upcoming trial in September.

LOOK AHEAD: WHAT TO KEEP WATCH ON

Japan's Abe Hopes to Defuse US-Iran Tensions

Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe is scheduled to tour Iran from June 12-14, where he will meet President Hassan Rouhani and Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. The move comes amidst rising tensions between the United States and the Islamic Republic, and Japan hopes to mediate between the two during the visit.

US Seeks Support for Afghan Peace Plan

The United States' envoy for peace in Afghanistan, Zalmay Khalilzad, will be travelling to Afghanistan, Belgium, Germany, Pakistan, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates through June 16 to lobby for support for a peace plan in Afghanistan. Whilst in Doha, Mr Khalilzad will also meet Taliban officials.

#MUSTREAD: WHAT'S POPULAR ON OUR SOCIAL MEDIA

FACEBOOK: "I do think they [Palestinians] should have self-determination. I'm going to leave the details until we come out with the actual plan," White House Senior Adviser Jared Kushner said during an interview with Axios, while avoiding saying explicitly if a two-state solution would be considered.

What's a useful tool for building tolerance? Positive, recurrent exposure. Liverpool's Mohamed Salah, a visibly Arab and Muslim player, is helping to build positive attitudes towards the faith, says this study from Stanford University.

TWITTER: Members of various faiths, including many Jews, joined Muslims at an iftar held at the Maghain Aboth Synagogue. The event was organised by the Jewish Welfare Board, the Inter-Religious Organisation of Singapore and interfaith group Roses of Peace for the Muslim community, two days before Hari Raya Puasa.



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