

MEIWeekly.



Israel described Abu al-Ata (above, circled in red), a senior commander in the Palestinian Islamic Jihad, as a “ticking bomb”. He was killed on Tuesday (12 November) in an Israeli airstrike. Photo: Israeli Foreign Ministry, shared on Twitter.

CALENDAR: UPCOMING INSTITUTE EVENTS

Rentier Islamism

The role of the Muslim Brotherhood in the Gulf is a topic that is discussed more broadly than it is understood. Join us on 28 November as Dr Courtney Freer examines the nature of Brotherhood affiliates in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states, what differentiates them from Brotherhood affiliates elsewhere, and the impact of GCC states’ domestic experience with Islamism on foreign policy.



WHAT’S NEWS: THE BIG HEADLINES THIS WEEK

Israel Kills Islamic Jihad Commander in Gaza

Abu al-Ata, a senior commander of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad militant group in the Gaza Strip was killed on Tuesday (12 November) by an Israeli airstrike, setting off retaliatory rocket attacks. Israel’s military blamed al-Ata for prior instances of rocket fire on the Jewish state. The escalation occurred after a period of relative calm along the border, and coincided with heightened political tensions in Israel over the leadership of its next government. Some spectators believe that Tuesday’s fighting would increase the likelihood of co-operation between Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his competitor Mr Benny Gantz.



Baqura (above), known in Hebrew as “the island of peace”, was one of the border lands which Israelis were granted free access to under the 1994 Israel–Jordan peace treaty. Jordan ended the 25-year-old arrangement on 10 November. Photo: Yoavd, as shared on Wikimedia Commons.

Jordan Reclaims Land Leased to Israelis

Jordan on Sunday (10 November) reclaimed border lands leased to Israel under a 1994 peace treaty between the two countries. The move was applauded by Jordanians, but Israelis found it a disappointing sign of the poor state of bilateral relations. Despite 25 years of peace, tensions between Israel and Jordan have periodically flared up over the management of the al-Aqsa mosque in Jerusalem, and developments in the Israeli–Palestinian conflict.

Turkey Begins Repatriation of IS Militants

Turkey began repatriating captured Islamic State (IS) militants held in Turkish prisons or Syria on Monday (11 November). Three IS suspects, from the United States, Denmark, and Germany, were deported on Monday, while plans to deport more alleged IS members have been announced. The Turkish interior ministry had previously warned that captured IS militants would be repatriated, even if their citizenships have been revoked.

LOOK AHEAD: WHAT TO KEEP WATCH ON

Saudi Aramco IPO to Start on 17 November

The initial public offering (IPO) of Saudi state oil giant Aramco will begin on 17 November. Bank analysts believe the IPO will value Aramco at between US\$1.2 trillion and US\$2.3 trillion, which would rank it as the world’s most valuable company. Some investors remain cautious of risks such as the need for Aramco to shoulder output restraints from the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries, while others see an opportunity not to be missed.

Deadline Looms for Gantz to Form Govt

The clock is ticking for Mr Benny Gantz who has up to 20 November to form a coalition government. He was given the mandate to do so after Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu failed to form a government in the aftermath of the 17 September deadlocked election in Israel. Mr Gantz’s negotiations with potential partners, however, have been complicated by the security situation in Gaza that erupted earlier this week.

#MUSTREAD: WHAT’S POPULAR ON OUR SOCIAL MEDIA

FACEBOOK: Lebanon-born Ms Roula Khalaf (below), who has written extensively on the Middle East, will become the *Financial Times*’ first female editor.

<https://bit.ly/33Nk0M7>

Very few ultra-Orthodox students study core curriculum subjects such as Maths and Science, a fact that means Israel’s future economy will not be able to sustain a modern, effective army, a new study warns.

<https://bit.ly/2QeNHSh>

TWITTER: James Le Mesurier, a critical player in creating and sustaining the Syrian civil defence group known as the White Helmets, has died. The group gained international renown for rescuing wounded civilians during Syria’s civil war.

<https://nyti.ms/34WaAsK>



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