

MEI Weekly.



Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman (R) welcomes Malaysian Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin (C) during his official visit to Saudi Arabia in March 2021. This week, Saudi Arabia's King Salman bin Abdulaziz announced that Saudi Arabia will provide Malaysia with urgent aid to battle the Covid-19 pandemic. Photo: Hishammuddin Hussein (Minister of Foreign Affairs of Malaysia) / Facebook.

WHAT'S HOT: MEI PUBLICATIONS, PODCASTS AND MORE

READ: In the latest addition to MEI's Insights series, MEI Research Fellow Ameem Lutfi argues that to outline key terms of the debate on regulating the booming trade in the means of violence, looking at century-long negotiations which hold important lessons is key. Read the full article [here](#).

LISTEN: In the 16th episode of MEI's podcast series Boots Off the Ground: Security in Transition in the Middle East and Beyond, Dr Noah Coburn discusses his latest book Under Contract: The Invisible Work of America's Global War and elaborates how colonial era structures for recruiting Gurkha soldiers from Nepal came to be remobilised for providing low-cost precarious labour for the American war in Afghanistan. Listen to the podcast [here](#).

READ: Keen to know what's keeping the GCC states from unlocking their innovation potential and how can they overcome the challenges they're faced with? This piece written for MEI sheds light on these. Read the full article [here](#).

READ: The increasingly likely victory of the Taliban in Afghanistan is going to be a strategic nightmare for Iran and this piece analyses the reasons why that might be the case. Read the full article [here](#).

WHAT'S NEWS: THE BIG HEADLINES THIS WEEK

Saudi King Orders Urgent Medical Aid to Malaysia

Saudi Arabia's King Salman bin Abdulaziz has ordered urgent medical supplies to be sent to Malaysia to help the country overcome the Covid-19 repercussions. The supplies will be delivered by the King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Centre (KSRelief), the kingdom's humanitarian arm and the aid includes 1 million doses of a vaccine against Covid-19, medical equipment and preventive supplies, KSRelief Supervisor-General and Royal Advisor Dr Abdullah Al Rabiah said.

Israel Begins Pfizer Covid-19 Vaccine for At-Risk Children Under 12

Israel authorised the use of the Pfizer Covid-19 vaccine for vulnerable children between five and 11 years old, as cases of the highly contagious Delta variant rise sharply. Israeli officials said young children should be given the shot if they have a high likelihood of serious illness or death from Covid-19 because of underlying conditions. The health ministry said each individual case would require special approval and children would be given a lower dosage of the vaccine in accordance with data provided from Pfizer.



A teen receives a dose of the Pfizer/BioNTech Covid-19 vaccine at the Misgav Ladach hospital in Jerusalem as Israel begins coronavirus vaccination campaign for 12 to 15-year-olds in June 2021. Starting this week, Israel extends the campaign to include medically vulnerable children under the age of 12. Photo: Menahem Kahana / AFP.

Biden Calls Halt to US Combat Mission in Iraq

The US will end its combat mission in Iraq by the end of the year but counterterrorism co-operation with Baghdad will continue, President Joe Biden said on Monday (26 July). In White House talks with Iraqi Prime Minister Mustafa Al-Kadhimi, Mr Biden said the US role in Iraq would shift to advising and training Iraqi forces to deal with the continuing threat from Daesh. There are currently 2,500 US troops in Iraq focusing on countering the remnants of Daesh and the shift is not expected to have a major impact since the US has already moved toward focusing on training Iraqi forces.

CALENDAR: UPCOMING MEI EVENTS

Between Co-operation & Confrontation: Has the US Renounced the Carter Doctrine?

The Biden administration's decision to pull out troops from Afghanistan has sparked discussions as to whether the US' Middle East role has fully evolved from a boots-on-the-ground presence to an offshore balancer. Yet, to what extent is the nature of this shift? Are Washington's mixed signals forcing GCC countries to review their strategic alliances, including hedging with other big powers including China?

To find out this and more, join us for this public talk which will be conducted online via Zoom on **Tuesday, 3 August 2021**, from **8pm to 9.30pm** (SGT). For more details and to register, click [here](#).

LOOK AHEAD: WHAT TO KEEP WATCH ON

Israel to Issue 16,000 More Work Permits for Palestinians

Israel announced on Wednesday, 28 July, that it is to issue 16,000 more permits for Palestinians from the occupied West Bank to work in its construction and hotel industries, taking the total to over 100,000. The announcement followed discussions between Israeli Defense Minister Benny Gantz and Palestinian President Mahmud Abbas and the Israeli government is expected to approve it next week.



Yemen Braces for Third Covid-19 Wave Amid Vaccine Shortage

Yemen's internationally recognised government has put health facilities and workers on high alert and demanded that people follow Covid-19 restrictions as the country braces for a third wave of the virus. Ishraq Al-Subaee, a spokesman for the Aden-based National Coronavirus Committee said the government is working on boosting the supply of oxygen and applying more health measures to mitigate the impact. Ishraq said Yemen will receive thousands of AstraZeneca and Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccines in August and that priority would be given to Yemenis who would receive their first shot.

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