

MEI Weekly.



Saudi Arabia's Public Investment Fund has announced this week that it is partnering with the Saudi stock exchange, which it owns, to establish the Riyadh Voluntary Exchange Platform, which would allow for the trading of carbon credits and offsets across the Middle East and North Africa. Photo: Fayez Nureldine / AFP.

WHAT'S HOT: MEI PUBLICATIONS, PODCASTS AND MORE

LISTEN: In the 18th episode of our Boots Off the Ground: Security in Transition in the Middle East and Beyond podcast series, hear about how private sector companies are changing their approach to security and human rights, particularly when operating in complex or conflict-affected environments. Listen to the podcast [here](#).

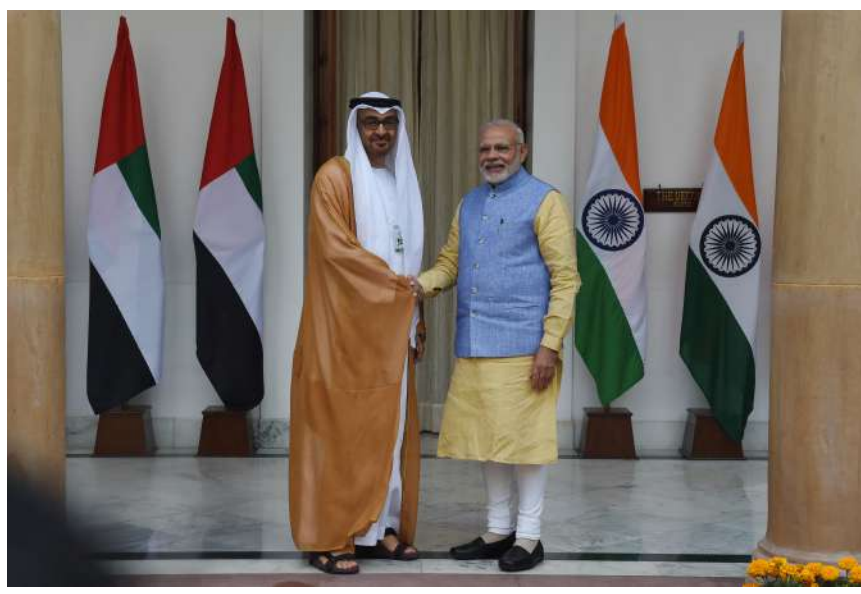
WHAT'S NEWS: THE BIG HEADLINES THIS WEEK

Saudi Arabia's Wealth Fund Plans Green Debt Issuance

Saudi Arabia's \$430 billion sovereign wealth fund plans to announce its first green debt issuance as it looks to increase the role that environmental, social and governance principles play in its investments. The Public Investment Fund (PIF) will announce the green issuance "very soon", Governor Yasir Al-Rumayyan said in a virtual event on Tuesday, 21 September 2021. A green borrowing by the PIF would be the first for a sovereign wealth fund and comes as the kingdom, one of the world's largest oil exporters, looks to reshape its reputation on environmental issues. The PIF has also been investing more into businesses that benefit from a transition away from fossil fuels, mirroring the country's wider strategy to diversify its economy and reduce reliance on crude sales alone.

India, UAE Plan to Lift Bilateral Trade to \$100 Billion in Five Years

India and the UAE plan to conclude a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) by the end of the year with the aim to lift trade between the two countries by 70% in five years, trade ministers of both countries said. India's Trade Minister Piyush Goyal said both countries would also aim to sign an "early harvest" trade deal soon, before concluding the CEPA, which is likely to be implemented by March 2022. India is looking to establish trade relationships and new pacts with a number of countries to revive its economy and the UAE, already India's third largest trading partner, is one of them.



The Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi General Sheikh Mohammed Bin Zayed Al Nahyan (L) shakes hands with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi during the former's official visit to India in January 2017. This week, India and the UAE announced plans to conclude a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement by the end of the year to lift trade between the two countries. Photo: Money Sharma / AFP.

\$600m in Additional Aid Pledged for Yemen

Saudi Arabia, the US, the European Union (EU) and other nations announced \$600 million worth of additional humanitarian and development aid for Yemen at a high-level meeting at the United Nations (UN) on Wednesday, 22 September 2021. Saudi Arabia, through the King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Centre, will provide an additional \$90 million in humanitarian aid for war-torn Yemen. The US promised an additional \$290 million in donations for 2021, while the EU announced that it will donate a further €119 million (\$139.65 million). Canada, Qatar, Sweden and Brazil together pledged additional donations worth over \$120 million, some of which will be provided to UN bodies to ensure that food security, sanitation, healthcare and education continues to be delivered to as many Yemenis as possible but world leaders repeatedly made clear that a political solution to the conflict is the only way to truly end the humanitarian crisis.

CALENDAR: UPCOMING MEI EVENTS

ME 101 Lecture Series 2021: Session 6

Throughout history, the Middle East has been locked in engagements with the West through crusades, wars, colonialism and terrorism. However, there are many lesser-known facets too. This series of lectures will give you a more comprehensive overview of the region and its inevitable impacts locally and worldwide.



Join us for the 5th lecture which aims to explore what Israel's current regional axes of co-operation and competition are. This public talk will be conducted online via Zoom on **Thursday, 30 September 2021, at 5.00pm (SGT)**. For more details and to register, click [here](#).

LOOK AHEAD: WHAT TO KEEP WATCH ON

Iran Wants Nuclear Talks That Enable Lifting of Sanctions

Iran wants to resume nuclear talks with world powers that would lead to the removal of US sanctions, Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi told the annual UN General Assembly on Tuesday, 21 September 2021, as negotiations about reinstating a 2015 nuclear pact have stalled. "The Islamic Republic considers the useful talks whose ultimate outcome is the lifting of all oppressive (US) sanctions," Raisi said in his pre-recorded address. Tehran (US) signalled that the negotiations in Vienna would resume in a few weeks but insiders expect Mr Raisi to adopt a tougher line when the talks resume.



Turkey Sends More Troops to Syria

Turkey has sent more troops to northwestern Syria as it prepares for a critical meeting with the leaders of Russia and Iran next week, signalling its determination to carry on blocking an assault on one of the Syrian war's last front lines. While there is no sign of a major all-out offensive, an uptick in attacks by Russian warplanes and Syrian forces on the territory has attracted the attention of Turkish officials already facing growing domestic criticism over the cost of housing the world's biggest refugee population. President Recep Tayyip Erdogan is expected to raise the Idlib escalation with President Vladimir Putin and another prominent backer of the Syrian regime – Iran's President Ebrahim Raisi – during his upcoming visit to Sochi on 29 September 2021.

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