

MEI Weekly



Then-Israeli president Reuven Rivlin (C) is flanked by Prime Minister Naftali Bennett (L) and alternate Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Yair Lapid during a photo with the new coalition government on 14 June 2021. On Wednesday, 6 April 2022, Idit Silman, a senior lawmaker left the coalition, depriving the government of a parliamentary majority. Photo: Emmanuel Dunand / AFP.

WHAT'S HOT: MEI PUBLICATIONS, PODCASTS AND MORE

READ: In the latest piece of our *MEI Perspectives* series, MEI Visiting Research Professor Gyorgy Busztin says that regardless the reasons for the ban, Afghanistan putting its image of "Opiate Central" behind it may benefit the country. Read it [here](#).

WHAT'S NEWS: THE BIG HEADLINES THIS WEEK

Senior Lawmaker Quits Israel's Coalition

Israel's fragile government was thrown into crisis on Wednesday after a senior lawmaker quit the coalition, leaving it without a majority in Parliament and auguring a return to the political instability that has hobbled the country in recent years. Idit Silman, the chairwoman of the governing coalition and effectively its chief whip, said she was resigning because coalition colleagues had failed to compromise and that the government's direction did not reflect the values of the right-wing voters who brought the Yamina party to power. The coalition crisis comes at a delicate time after a series of deadly terrorist attacks that had already put pressure on the government. Israel's security forces remain on high alert amid fears of more unrest over the next month, when the rare convergence of Ramadan, Passover and Easter is expected to raise tensions further between Israelis and Palestinians.

More Inflation Pain Ahead for Turkey

Wall Street banks predicted more price pressures ahead for Turkey after the country reported annual inflation rates climbing to a 20-year high of 61.14 per cent in March. They say the country's annual inflation would hover in the 65-70 per cent range until the very end of the year when it could fall to 44 per cent due to strong base effects. "We also see upside risks from commodity prices and the monetary policy stance which is not geared to fighting inflation," Murat Unur at Goldman Sachs wrote in a note to clients. Turkey has also been cautioned that the real rates there are now deeply in negative territory and are likely to fuel inflation further in the coming months.



Women shop bread at a market in Ankara on 20 December 2021 as Turkey's troubled lira nose-dived after Turkish President Erdogan cited Muslim teachings to justify not raising interest rates to stabilise the currency. Earlier this week, Wall Street predicted more price pressures ahead, as the country's annual inflation could hover in the 65-70 per cent range until the end of the year. Photo: Adem Altan / AFP.

Jordan's Prince Hamzah Renounces His Title

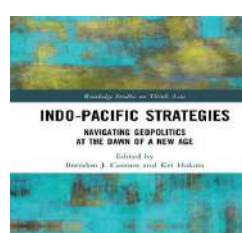
An outspoken half-brother of Jordan's king has relinquished his princely title. Prince Hamzah bin Hussein posted the announcement on his official Twitter account. He wrote that he was driven to the decision because his convictions cannot be reconciled with the "current approaches, policies and methods of our institutions." It was the latest chapter in an ongoing palace feud that saw the junior royal placed under house arrest a year ago. The Royal Hashemite Court made no immediate comment. It also was not instantly clear if Hamzah's decision to relinquish his title will help restore his freedom of movement.

CALENDAR: MEI EVENTS

The Middle East & The Indo-Pacific: The New Geopolitics

The Indo-Pacific region has gained prominence as the world's major powers gravitated towards this space to expand their influence.

To understand the implications of this new nexus between the Middle East and the Indo-Pacific, this webinar will discuss with the authors of a book dedicated to the Indo-Pacific strategies, as they unpack the geopolitics of the Indo-Pacific and talk about the place of Middle Eastern powers in that environment.



This public talk will be conducted online via Zoom on **Wednesday, 27 April 2022, at 5.00pm (SGT)**. For more details and to register, click [here](#).

#ICYMI: Climate Commitments: Less Reason for the Arab Region to Cop Out?

Can the next two Conference of the Parties (COP) meetings – COP 27 and COP 28 – serve as outlets for the Arab region to highlight their unique climate challenges?

Will there be an increase in regional climate co-operation?



In collaboration with the Arab Gulf States Institute in Washington (AGSIW), MEI (NUS) hosted a panel to tackle these questions and more.

Click [here](#) to catch up on the insightful discussion we had.

LOOK AHEAD: WHAT TO KEEP WATCH ON

Egypt, Turkey to Boost Tourism

In the wake of the stagnation that hit the vital tourism sector in Egypt since the start of the Russian war on Ukraine 24 Feb, Egypt is contemplating new ways to attract foreign tourists. The conflict has halted the flow of tourists from the two countries, which bodes ill for the tourism sector since Russian and Ukrainian tourists account for roughly a third of the annual number of incoming tourists to Egypt. Egyptian Deputy Minister of Tourism Ghada Shalaby told Reuters that Egypt is currently studying ways to attract tourists including Russians, by allowing them to enter through Turkey and then to Egypt.



Iran's Parliament Wants More in Nuclear Talks

Members of the Iranian parliament submitted a letter to President Raisi, calling on him to take a tougher stand in the currently paused indirect talks with the US over the revival of the 2015 nuclear deal. Drafted by hardline lawmaker Mahmoud Nabavian, the letter received signatures from 190 members, more than two thirds of the conservative legislative body. According to Iranian media outlets, the document specifically urged the president to seek "more robust guarantees" from Washington before any new accord, which Tehran and world powers have been intensely negotiating in multiple rounds over the past year.

FOLLOW US FOR THE LATEST UPDATES!



CAN'T MAKE IT TO OUR EVENTS? LISTEN AT YOUR OWN TIME!

