

MEIWeekly.



Head of Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps Hossein Salami takes part in Revolutionary Guards colonel Sayad Khodayee's funeral procession at Imam Hussein square in Tehran on 24 May 2022. Assaultants on motorcycles hit the colonel with five bullets as he sat in his car outside his home. Photo: ATTA KENARE / AFP

WHAT'S HOT: MEI PUBLICATIONS, PODCASTS AND MORE

READ: MEI Visiting Research Professor Gyorgy Busztin says the draconian measures disconnect Afghan women from public life and banishing them from productive activity will be catastrophic to the country: Read it [here](#).

READ: MEI Principal Research Fellow Alessandro Arduino and Visiting Research Professor Gyorgy Busztin share with The Business Times about how ASEAN countries and the Middle East benefit from each other due to the latter's interest in Asia. Read it [here](#).

READ: MEI Principal Research Fellow Alessandro Arduino details what we can learn about how China deals with partnerships during the Ukraine crisis. Read it [here](#).

WHAT'S NEWS: THE BIG HEADLINES THIS WEEK

Senior Member of IRGC Killed

A senior member of Iran's Revolutionary Guards Corps was assassinated in Tehran on Sunday, 22 May outside his home, according to a statement by the Guards. The statement identified the man as colonel Sayad Khodayee and said he had fought for years in Syria as part of Iran's military development to "defend the shrine" – a term Iran uses to justify its presence in the war in Syria and to identify those fighting the Islamic State. The statement also blamed the assassination on foreign "terrorists" affiliated with world powers considered enemies of Iran's Islamic revolution. State media reported that the two assassins approached colonel Sayed Khodayee's car and fired five bullets.

Turkey-Israel Relations Show Signs of Warming

Mevlut Cavusoglu's trip to Israel this week will make him the first Turkish foreign minister to visit the country in 15 years – the latest step in a rapprochement between the countries after years of stormy ties. Energy sector cooperation is expected to top the agenda, with Ankara expressing its willingness for a partnership between Israel and Turkey in a project that could carry Israeli natural gas to Turkey and then potentially to Europe. However, a wider issue is also expected to be discussed – the re-establishment of diplomatic ties at the ambassador level, after Turkey expelled the Israeli ambassador in 2018.



Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu gives an opening statement before meeting with Israeli and Turkish businessmen in Tel Aviv on 25 May 2022. Photo: JACK GUEZ / AFP

Shift in Egypt's Climate Talks' Focus

Egypt will position itself as an impartial arbiter while hosting this year's COP27 UN climate summit, as it pushes other nations to act on climate pledges while promoting the interests of the developing world, a senior Egyptian official said. A natural gas exporter, Egypt takes over presidency of the UN climate talks from Britain. Last year's summit in Glasgow ended with the nearly 200 countries in attendance promising to strengthen their climate pledges this year.

CALENDAR: UPCOMING MEI EVENTS

Turkey's Middle East Ambitions and Regional Role

In the wake of Washington recalibrating its position in the Middle East, Turkey's role becomes crucial not only because of its intrinsic strength but also due to its relative standing by virtue of its NATO membership which could make it a conduit for Western powers. The discussion aims to delve into understanding Ankara's Middle East ambitions and its regional role.



This public talk will be conducted online via Zoom on **Wednesday, 1 June 2022, at 4pm (SGT)**. For more details and to register, click [here](#).

China's Digital Currency Ripple Effects from the Gulf to Singapore

Private companies Alibaba and Tencent spearheaded the introduction of e-payments within China but are now subject to increasing regulation. Three experts will explore the potential economic and geopolitical impact of China's initiatives in digital finance and the opportunities, risks and choices for countries in the Middle East.



This public talk will be conducted online via Zoom on **Tuesday, 7 June 2022, at 5pm (SGT)**. For more details and to register, click [here](#).

[Book Launch] Governance and Domestic Policymaking in Saudi Arabia

Domestic policymaking and governance is pertinent given the importance of the government's economic diversification plans: Saudi Vision 2030 and the National Transformation Programme (NTP) 2020 and revised NTP 2.0.



This discussion examines the progress made in the kingdom's domestic transformation efforts, their implications for state-society relations and the economics of the rentier social contract, among other issues.

This public talk will be conducted online via Zoom on **Wednesday, 8 June 2022, at 4pm (SGT)**. For more details and to register, click [here](#).

LOOK AHEAD: WHAT TO KEEP WATCH ON

Nuclear Deal's Future a Question Mark

Whether Iran and world powers can reach a deal to salvage the landmark nuclear agreement is a "huge question mark," the Biden administration's chief negotiator told US lawmakers earlier this week. "We do not have a deal with Iran and prospects for reaching one are, at best, tenuous," US Special Envoy for Iran Robert Malley said during testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. He told the panel that the "odds of a successful negotiation are lower than the odds of failure" but the administration was still seeking to re-enter the deal.



Swift Formation of New Government Needed

The UN Security Council welcomed the facts that parliamentary elections in Lebanon went ahead as planned on 15 May "despite challenging situations" but called for the swift formation of a new, inclusive government and the "urgent implementation" of previously outlined economic reforms. Council members said that the reforms should include the adoption of an appropriate national budget for 2022.

FOLLOW US FOR THE LATEST UPDATES!



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

