MEIWeekly.



Guards colonel Sayad Khodayee's funeral procession at Imam Hussein square in Tehran on 24 May 2022. Assailants 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

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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.

Mevlut Cavusoglu's trip to Israel this week will make him the first Turkish foreign minister to

Turkey-Israel Relations Show Signs of Warming

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.



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

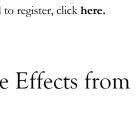
In the wake of Washington recalibrating its position in the Middle East, Turkey's role becomes crucial not only because of its

Regional Role

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.

Turkey's Middle East Ambitions and

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

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 public talk will be conducted online via Zoom on



This discussion examines the progress made in the kingdom's economic 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.

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

LOOK AHEAD: WHAT TO KEEP WATCH ON

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

appropriate national budget for 2022.





Podbean







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