

# MEIWeekly.



Minister of Home Affairs and Minister of Law, Mr K Shanmugam, and MEI Chairman Bilahari Kausikan kicked off MEI's Annual Conference 2023 by discussing the evolving dynamics in the Middle East, in line with this year's theme of great power competition.

## WHAT'S HOT: MEI PUBLICATIONS, PODCASTS, & MORE

- **READ:** Minister Shanmugam and Mr Bilahari's opening dialogue at the conference revolved around the implications of the US presence and China's growing influence in the Middle East, as well as the cultural shifts in the region, and their impact on South-east Asia. Read the full transcript [here](#).

## WHAT'S NEWS: THE BIG HEADLINES THIS WEEK

### Erdogan Secures Victory in Presidential Runoff

The President's successful re-election solidifies his grip on Turkey, potentially securing his power for a quarter-century, as he deepens his conservative imprint and pursues a stronger nation despite tensions with Western allies.

### UAE Withdraws from US-led Maritime Force

Political analysts say the Emiratis' latest move could be intended as a message to Washington that the country is displeased with the level of American protection for its allies in the Persian Gulf against threats from Iran, and must look out for its own interests.



Abu Dhabi "withdrew its participation" from the 38-nation Combined Maritime Forces, headquartered in Bahrain, two months ago, according to a foreign ministry statement.

### Moscow and Riyadh Reportedly at Odds Over Oil

According to reports, Saudi Arabia's efforts to increase oil prices through production cuts have been undermined by Russia's influx of cheap crude supply. The oil-rich Gulf nation has expressed frustration with Moscow for failing to honour its previous commitment to reduce production.

## CALENDAR: MEI EVENTS

### Qatar's Foreign Policy: Credibility and Certainty

MEI's first in-person session of the Bridging the Gulf focused on Doha's ambitions to emerge as a significant player in both the regional and global arenas, while examining the obstacles that were faced on its journey towards prominence, as well as its navigation through an era fraught with disinformation. Missed the session? Catch the recap [here](#).



Director of Media and Communication at Qatar's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mr Ibrahim Al-Hashmi(L), was the guest speaker for this session of this series.

## LOOK AHEAD: WHAT TO KEEP A WATCH ON

### Iraq to Build \$17 Billion Transport Project

Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammed Shia al-Sudan said that the upcoming project would facilitate the movement of goods from the Gulf to Europe, and would be "an economic lifeline and a promising opportunity for the convergence of interests, history, and cultures".



The plans were announced at a conference in Baghdad, at which transport ministers from the Gulf states, Turkey, Iran, Syria, and Jordan were present. Photo: IraqiPMO / Twitter

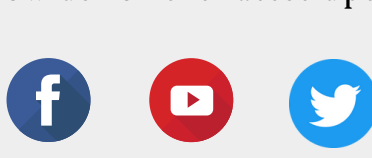
### Oman to Broker New Iran Nuclear Talks for the US?

Amidst conflicting reports, sources indicated that US officials reached out to Muscat to explore the revival of nuclear talks between Washington and Tehran.



Oman's Sultan Haitham bin Tarik (L), whose nation is a long time mediator between the West and Tehran, with President Ebrahim Raisi of Iran during their meeting in Tehran last week.

Follow us for the latest updates!



Can't make it to our events? Listen in your own time!

