

# MEIWeekly.



In recent months, President Joe Biden's top foreign policy advisors have been visiting Saudi Arabia in pursuit of a formidable goal: achieving diplomatic normalisation between Tel Aviv and Riyadh. Photo: Mandel Ngan / Pool / AFP

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

- **READ:** This latest Insight analyses the disparities between Israel and Taiwan in adapting to evolving security environments, taking into account defence budgets, US assistance, and resistance to military reform. Read the article [here](#).

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

### Saudis Align with US on Israel Ties Normalisation

According to US officials, Washington and Riyadh have agreed on the broad contours of a deal in which Saudi Arabia would recognise Israel. This recognition would be in exchange for concessions to the Palestinians, US security guarantees, and cooperation in civilian nuclear help.

### Pentagon Ramps Up Deployment to the Persian Gulf

Over 3,000 US Navy personnel and Marines entered the Suez Canal to address potential Iranian threats to commercial tankers in the Persian Gulf. The Marines' exact role in deterring Iran and protecting neighbouring Arab states remains unspecified by the White House.



Iran's navy and Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps have harassed or seized control of at least 20 commercial shipping tankers in the region over the past two years, according to the US 5th Fleet's numbers. Photo: US Virtual Embassy Iran

### Race for Investment in Pakistan Fuels Rivalry

Abu Dhabi's increased investment in Pakistan could trigger Riyadh to follow suit as part of their unspoken rivalry. If a business race unfolds between both these Gulf nations in Pakistan, Islamabad would face the challenge of managing its relations with both of its crucial allies.

## CALENDAR: MEI EVENTS

### Hope and an Eye on the Future: The UAE's Space Sector

Curious about how the UAE's space initiative will shape its future? How far have local interest and capacity come since the inception of the Space Strategy in 2017? Director of the National Space Science and Technology Center at UAE University, Mr Ali Al Shehhi, will answer these questions and more in MEI's latest Bridging the Gulf session. This public talk will be conducted via Zoom on 16 August 2023 at 3pm (SGT). For more details and to sign up, click [here](#).



The webinar will also explore key findings of the UAE's Mars Mission as well as analyse its National Space Strategy 2030. Photo: MEI

### ME 101 2023 #01: Great Power Competition

Take a captivating voyage through the ME 101 lecture series, commencing on 17 August 2023, at 5 pm (SGT). Explore the significance of Middle East developments for Singapore, as explored by MEI Executive Director Michelle Teo. Following that, gain insights from MEI Senior Research Fellow Jean-Loup Samaan on great power competition, its regional repercussions, and beyond. This event will be conducted both in-person and online via Zoom. Save the date! For more information and to register, click [here](#).



The lecture will also address the revision of strategies by regional powers like Saudi Arabia, Israel, and the UAE in response to the evolving "cold war" dynamics. Photo: United States Air Force

### ME 101 2023 #02: Regional Realignment

Participate in the second session of the ME 101 lecture series, where MEI Senior Research Fellow Asif Shuja and Policy Fellow at the Bourse & Bazaar Foundation Jacopo Scita, will delve into an analysis of Iran's outreach within the region and explore its recent agreement with Saudi Arabia, facilitated by China. Uncover the far-reaching implications on the regional landscape and more. This public talk will be conducted via Zoom. For more information and to register, click [here](#).



The China-brokered Iran-Saudi deal was an unimaginably topsy-turvy development, given their decades-long animosity. Photo: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the People's Republic of China

## LOOK AHEAD: WHAT TO KEEP A WATCH ON

### Israeli Foreign Minister to Visit Bahrain

Israel's Foreign Minister Eli Cohen will have his first public meeting in the Gulf state in September, with an itinerary that also includes a trip to another Muslim-majority nation, Albania.



The Minister's (in picture) meeting in the Gulf nation was previously rumoured to be delayed due to National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir's presence at the Temple Mount, leading to condemnations in the Arab world. Photo: Gov.il

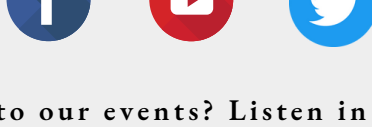
### UK-Turkey Center to Combat Illegal Migration

On Wednesday, the United Kingdom declared that Ankara and London had entered into an agreement to enhance cooperation in addressing irregular migration caused by armed conflicts, instability, and economic challenges.

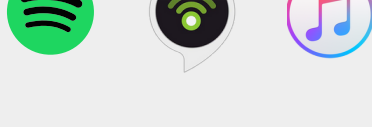


Commenting on the deal on Wednesday, UK Immigration Minister Robert Jenrick (in picture) described Ankara as "one of the most important" allies of London in efforts to prevent the flow of migrants. Photo: GOV.UK

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