

MEI Weekly.



A bust of slain Iranian Revolutionary Guards (IRGC) Commander Qasem Soleimani being displayed at the entrance of the pitch at the Naghsh-e-Jahan Stadium in Isfahan during the AFC Champions League Group C football match between Iran's Sepahan and Saudi Arabia's Al-Ittihad on 2 October 2023. Photo: Morteza Salehi / Tasnim News / AFP

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

- **WRITE:** MEI's latest *Insights* examines India's "Look West" policy, highlighting its growing partnerships with Israel and the UAE within the I2U2 alliance amidst increasing geopolitical challenges in the Middle East and the Indo-Pacific. Read the article [here](#).
- **READ:** MEI Senior Research Fellow Jean-Loup Samaan outlines the potential elements of an "ironclad" security pact that Biden's Gulf allies are seeking from the US. Read his comments in the article [here](#).

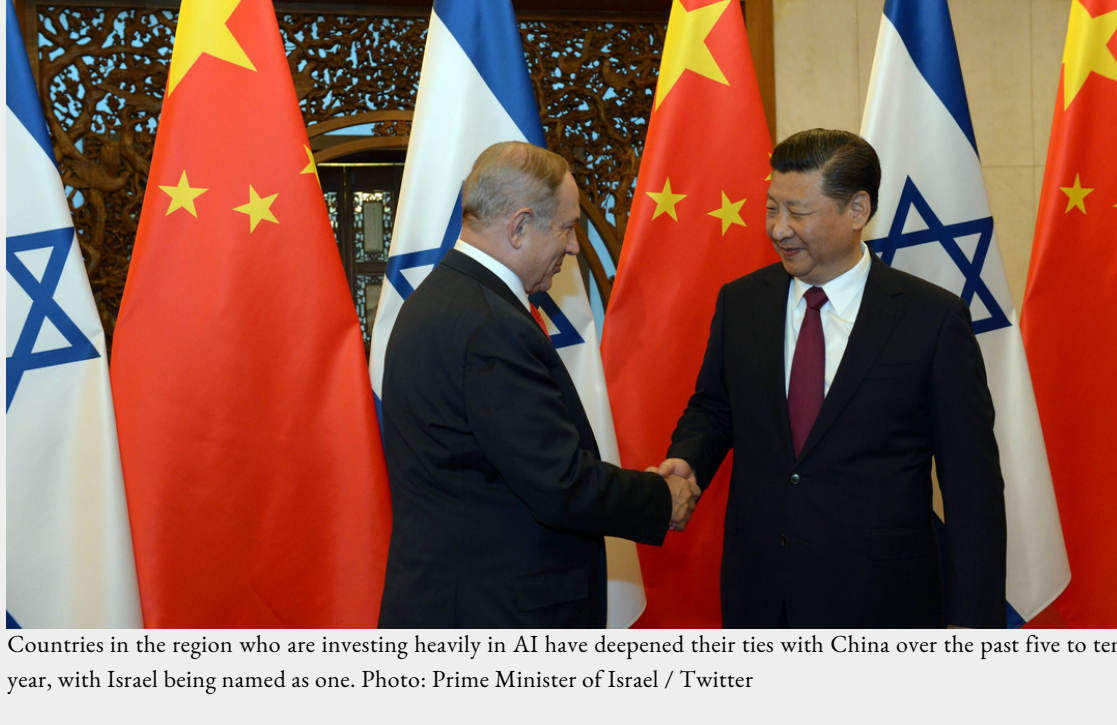
WHAT'S NEWS: THE BIG HEADLINES THIS WEEK

Saudi-Iran Complexities Emerge in ACL Match

Al-Ittihad's Asian Champions League match with Iran's Sepahan was called off after the Saudi team refused to leave their dressing room due to a statue of assassinated Iranian General Soleimani placed at the pitch entrance, reflecting the fragility of ties between both countries.

US-China Tech War in the Middle East

Washington's restriction on the export of its most advanced chips to the Middle East, aimed at preventing Beijing from acquiring them through workarounds, is threatening to place its closest allies in the region under close scrutiny.



Countries in the region who are investing heavily in AI have deepened their ties with China over the past five to ten year, with Israel being named as one. Photo: Prime Minister of Israel / Twitter

Israeli Herders Displacing Palestinians

In remote West Bank areas, herding communities are abandoning their homes at an alarming rate due to intimidation tactics employed by Israeli settlers, whose aim is to chip away at wide expanses of land that the leadership in Ramallah hopes will form a future Palestinian state.

CALENDAR: MEI EVENTS

ME 101 2023: Closing Session

Congratulations on reaching the finale of the ME 101 lecture series! In this concluding session, MEI Executive Director Michelle Teo will dissect the thought-provoking discussions that have unfolded throughout the series and delve into the implications it holds for Singapore. This public talk will be conducted both, in-person and via Zoom on 12 October 2023 at 5pm (SGT). For more details and to sign up, click [here](#).



Singapore's Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong had previously emphasised the Middle East's significance to the nation, given the emotional impact of the Israeli-Palestinian issue on its substantial Muslim population. Photo: PMO Singapore

ICYMI- ME 101 2023 #05: The Changing Gulf

Didn't have a chance to catch the ME 101 lecture on the Gulf Arab states' socio-cultural evolution? We've got you covered! Dive into the recap through our video or podcast. Your exclusive access key to the lecture is [right here!](#)



The lecture also explored how economic diversification, urbanisation, and shifting societal attitudes have impacted the traditional role of the family unit as a social anchor.

LOOK AHEAD: WHAT TO KEEP A WATCH ON

Blinken To Visit Israel and Saudi Arabia

US' top diplomat will also travel to the West Bank and Morocco in the third week of October as the Biden administration works to advance the brokering of a peace deal between Tel Aviv and Riyadh.



The expected trip would be US Secretary of State Antony Blinken's fourth visit to Israel since his appointment in January 2021. Photo: Secretary Antony Blinken / Twitter

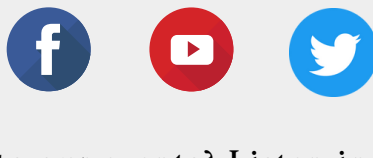
Third UK-Turkey Railway Project in the Works?

London, through its export credit agency UK Export Finance (UKEF), is in talks to finance its third railway project in Ankara. The deal is expected to close soon, according to an insider source, though details remain undisclosed pending finalisation.



UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak and Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan agreed in July to explore closer collaboration in various areas. Photo: Gov.uk

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