

MEI Weekly.



On Tuesday, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said that Tel Aviv will launch an invasion of the southern Gaza city of Rafah regardless of truce talks with Hamas. Photo: AFP

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

- **READ:** MEI Senior Research Fellow Jean-Loup Samaan comments on Beijing's expanding role in meeting Middle Eastern defence needs and Iraq's strategic shift towards deeper partnerships with China in the energy sector, moving away from traditional US alliances. Read the article [here](#).

WHAT'S NEWS: THE BIG HEADLINES THIS WEEK

Saudis Push for 'Plan B' in Key Deal with US

Riyadh is seeking a more modest agreement with Washington instead of a deal involving normalisation with Tel Aviv, in the absence of a ceasefire in Gaza and due to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's resistance to a two-state solution.

Blinken Says 'Time is Now' for Israel-Hamas Deal

US Secretary of State Antony J Blinken delivered twin messages to Hamas and Israel on Wednesday, pressing the militant group to accept a cease-fire proposal while at the same time urging Tel Aviv to put off a major ground invasion into Rafah.



On his seventh visit to the region since the Gaza war began, Mr Blinken made clear that he expected more from Israel. Photo: AFP

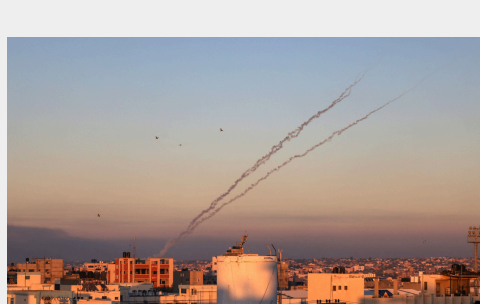
Over 200 Detained in May Day Demonstrations in Turkey

Riot police used pepper spray and rubber bullets to disperse tens of thousands who had gathered in Istanbul's Sarachane district after demonstrators sought to march towards Taksim Square, a symbolic venue to mark International Workers Day.

CALENDAR: MEI EVENTS

ICYMI: Crisis in the Geopolitics of Mena

With confrontations seemingly giving way to patterns of de-escalation, such as normalisation between Iran and Saudi Arabia and the widening of the Abraham Accords, the region appeared to be on a path towards greater coherence just a year ago. However, has 7 October disrupted this trajectory? MEI explored this and more on Wednesday, 17 April 2024. You can now watch the full video or listen to the podcast of the event by clicking [here](#).

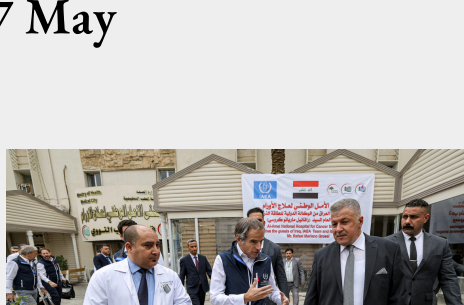


This event examined what has and has not changed in the Middle East since the Gaza war. Photo: AFP

LOOK AHEAD: WHAT TO KEEP A WATCH ON

IAEA Chief to Visit Iran on 6-7 May

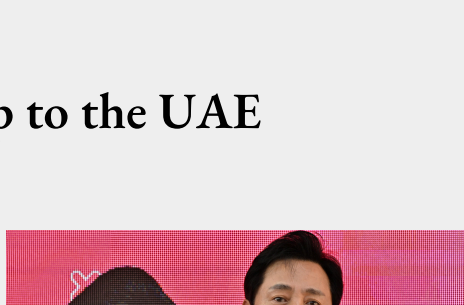
International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) chief Rafael Grossi will travel to Tehran for meetings with its senior officials amidst concerns that Iran may further step up its nuclear program.



Mr Grossi (centre) said in February that he was planning a visit to Tehran to tackle a "drifting apart" in relations between the agency and the Islamic Republic. Photo: AFP

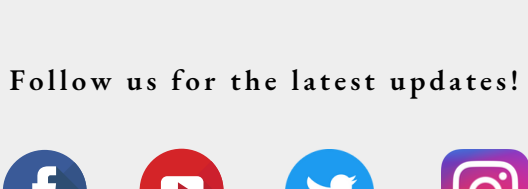
Seoul Mayor to Embark on Trip to the UAE

Mr Oh Se-hoon will embark on a seven-day trip to the UAE next week to attend an international conference on financial technology in Dubai and introduce his vision of the capital's innovative transportation in Abu Dhabi.



The mayor (in picture) is also scheduled to sign a MOU between Seoul's foreign investment promotion agency, Invest Seoul, and the Dubai Chamber of Commerce. Photo: AFP

Follow us for the latest updates!



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

