

MEIWeekly.



The Middle East war, now in its sixth day, began after US-Israeli strikes on 28 February hit several targets in Iran and killed its Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. The Islamic Republic responded with retaliatory missile and drone attacks on Tel Aviv and American-aligned Gulf states, which included civilian and energy targets. Photo: AFP

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

READ: US-Israeli strikes on Iran last week were pitched as "pre-emptive" and aimed at regime change — but is there a broader calculus at play? Explore this in MEI's Perspectives Series. Read the article [here](#).

READ: A critical economic corridor linking Middle Eastern energy and Asian markets is already sending ripples across Singapore and the region due to the ongoing conflict. Read the article [here](#).

WHAT'S NEWS: THE BIG HEADLINES THIS WEEK

US-Israel Strike Iran; Tehran Fires Back Across Gulf

As US and Israeli jets strike targets across Iran and Gulf states facing renewed bombardment from Tehran, President Donald Trump said he must be involved in determining the Islamic Republic's next leader and has voiced support for Iranian Kurdish forces to take the offensive.

Dozens of IRGC Members Flee Lebanon

Fearing they will be targeted after the Lebanese government ordered the arrests of Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), several fled Beirut. Lebanon was drawn into the Middle East war after Hezbollah attacked Israel in retaliation for the killing of Iran's Supreme Leader.



The Israeli military said late on Thursday that it had begun striking infrastructure belonging to Hezbollah in Beirut's southern suburb of Dahiyeh, after earlier warning all of its residents to evacuate the area immediately. Photo: AFP

Gulf Countries Face Nightmare Scenario Amid War

Tehran fired more than a thousand missiles and drones at Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait and Oman, killing several people in those countries. Reports suggest some of these nations are weighing a stronger response as frustration with Iran's reckless attacks grows.

CALENDAR: MEI EVENTS

ICYMI: Narratives of Sino-Middle Eastern Futures

Missed this book talk? MEI hosted the authors of 'Narratives of Sino-Middle Eastern Futures' to examine whether the region is moving towards a post-American Chinese hegemony or reaching the limits of transactional ties. Drawing on multilingual sources and thin constructivism, the discussion encompassed Saudi, Syrian, and Chinese elite narratives on the Middle Eastern order and Beijing's role within it. You can now catch the video of the event or the podcast [here](#).



Meanwhile, the Chinese government this week said it had evacuated over 3,000 of its citizens from Iran. Photo: AFP

LOOK AHEAD: WHAT TO KEEP A WATCH ON

Rising Oil Prices

Oil and gas prices continue to rise amid supply disruptions. Tehran's Tasnim news agency reported that a US tanker in the northern Persian Gulf was struck by an Iranian missile, while Qatar, the region's largest liquefied natural gas (LNG) producer, suspended its operations and declared force majeure on exports on Wednesday.



In an interview, Mr Trump said he was not concerned about rising US gas prices driven by the widening Iran conflict. Photo: AFP

China Offers to Mediate an End to Raging Conflict

Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Lin Jian (pictured) said Beijing is ready to mediate an end to the fighting and called for restraint. Mr Lin added that Foreign Minister Wang Yi had phone conversations with political leaders from across the Gulf region, including UAE Deputy Prime Minister Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan. The Chinese Foreign Minister said Beijing would back the UAE in ensuring national security and also supports other Gulf states in seeking to resolve this dispute through diplomacy.



Meanwhile, the Chinese government this week said it had evacuated over 3,000 of its citizens from Iran. Photo: China Foreign Ministry

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