

MEIWeekly.



Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu planned to carry out strikes against Iran earlier this month but United States President Donald Trump opposed reigniting the fighting before the American midterm elections, sources reported this week. Israeli forces were ready to strike various Iranian nuclear and regime sites on the weekend of 10 October. Photo: AFP

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

READ: How are the Houthis are morphing into a threat beyond Yemen? RSIS Research Fellow Ghada Soliman examines this in the latest MEI Perspectives series. Read the article [here](#).

READ: Mohamed Salah’s move to Trabzonspor exposes the unsustainable economics and fierce identity politics fuelling Turkish football. Click to read [here](#).

WHAT’S NEWS: THE BIG HEADLINES THIS WEEK

US and Israel Draw Up Plans for Strikes on Iran After Elections

As planning for a short but intensive operation progresses, the US and Israeli militaries stepped up exercises, flying planes over Iraq to practice strike maneuvers. Some officials say one more big round of attacks could push Tehran’s economy over the brink and force the country to make concessions.

Houthis Strike on Saudi Airport Kills Two

The militia also targeted the Saudi Defence Ministry in Riyadh, an Aramco facility in the Red Sea city of Yanbu, and Abha International Airport in the south of the country. Following weeks of deadly strikes by the rebels, Washington ordered some diplomatic staff to evacuate the Kingdom.



The Houthis have been pummeling Saudi Arabia’s aviation and energy infrastructure for weeks, killing at least 22 civilians and roiling energy markets. Oil prices jumped about 3 percent on Thursday, the highest since May. Photo: AFP

Singapore and UAE to Launch Economic Pact Negotiations

Both sides intend to launch negotiations on a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (Cepa), Singapore’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs said in a statement. Leaders of both nations witnessed the inking of agreements on energy and water cooperation, and disease vector control.

CALENDAR: MEI EVENTS

ICYMI:[Book Talk] Iron Dome

How did a missile defence system become one of the most recognisable military technologies in the world—and what does its story tell us about the future of warfare in the Middle East? In this talk, MEI Senior Research Fellow Jean-Loup Samaan presented his new book, tracing back Iron Dome’s trajectory from a small military project to a national symbol and a central pillar of US–Israel defence cooperation. He also dived into how the events of 7 October and the wars that followed exposed the limits of the “Iron Dome decade”— and what comes next for missile defence and deterrence in the region. If you missed this event, you can watch or listen to the the full talk [here](#).



The book reveals how a system reshaped Israel’s strategic culture, politics, and national identity. Photo: MEI-NUS

LOOK AHEAD: WHAT TO KEEP A WATCH ON

Israelis Heading to the Polls Next Tuesday

It will be the first poll since the devastating Hamas terrorist attacks three years ago kicked off a chain of events that forever reshaped the country and the region around it, and is effectively shaping up as a referendum on current Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s leadership. Polling figures are jumping around a bit, and most of the major media outlets run their own data but shows Yashar will be the largest party in the Knesset with between 20 and 23 seats, with Mr Netanyahu’s Likud party just behind.



Next week’s election is unlikely to produce a sweeping shift in Israel’s stance on a Palestinian state. Photo: AFP

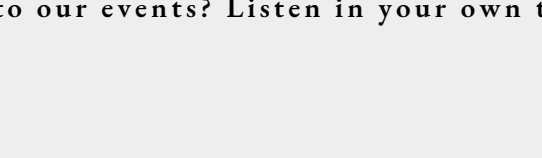
Egypt Calls for Yemen Talks

Cairo advocates exploring “every opportunity” to resolve the Yemen conflict diplomatically, its Foreign Minister Badr Abdelatty said, ahead of a Parliamentary vote next week on authorising the armed forces to support Saudi Arabia against the Iran-aligned Houthis. Any direct involvement of the Egyptian military, one of the region’s largest, would raise the stakes in the conflict between the Kingdom and the Houthis, an increasingly destabilising front in the expanding US-Israeli war on Iran.



President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi called for an urgent Parliamentary session to authorise military involvement supporting Saudi Arabia. Photo: AFP

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