

MEIWeekly.



Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu went into Tuesday's election carrying the public's fury over his failure to take responsibility for the 7 October Hamas attack. Yet, the initial results showed that his Likud party outperformed all others, though it fell short of a majority, plunging the country into political gridlock with no clear path to power. Photo: AFP

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

READ: Missed the MEI–Bisa webinar series on the war on Iran? MEI experts Liu Jia and Ellina offered key takeaways and examined why they matter for Asia. Read the summary [here](#).

READ: The Israeli election was seen as a referendum on Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and it looks like Likud will remain the largest party in Parliament, writes MEI Senior Research Fellow Jean-Loup Samaan. Click to read this Channel NewsAsia commentary [here](#).

WHAT'S NEWS: THE BIG HEADLINES THIS WEEK

Israeli Elections End In Political Gridlock

Mr Netanyahu's edge in Parliament presents Mr Gadi Eisenkot and his ideologically diverse bloc with a difficult choice: seek an alliance with Arab parties to topple him or join forces with the Israeli premier in a potential unity government. This sets the stage for weeks of jockeying and political uncertainty.

UAE Secretly Helping Houthis Target Saudi Forces: Reports

Citing sources familiar with the matter, reports said that UAE-aligned Yemeni forces had been providing targeting assistance to the Houthis while Abu Dhabi turned a blind eye. Other sources suggested that the UAE directly shared intelligence with the rebels to help them against Saudi forces.



Reports suggested that Abu Dhabi's and the Houthis' interests partially converged after Saudi Arabia sidelined the UAE in Yemen earlier this year. The US-aligned UAE directly aiding one of its chief regional opponents is significant. Photo: AFP

US Warns Gulf of Iran War Renewal

Washington reportedly told Arab countries to be prepared for a short, intense military campaign after the US midterm elections, people briefed on the conversations said. There are growing signs that American and Israeli forces are preparing potential strikes to muscle Tehran to the negotiating table.

CALENDAR: MEI EVENTS

ICYMI: S R Nathan Distinguished Lecture 2026

Visiting S Rajaratnam Professor of Strategic Studies Vali Nasr addressed one of the most consequential questions of our time: the future of Iran in the aftermath of two devastating wars in 2025–2026 that profoundly transformed its state and society. Amid an impending leadership transition and the severe toll of conflict on the nation's social and economic fabric, critical questions emerged. Specifically, the discussion centered on how the Islamic Republic would govern the nation moving forward, rebuild its economy, and recalibrate its foreign relations both within the region and across the globe. If you missed this MEI flagship event, you can watch or listen to the the full lecture [here](#).

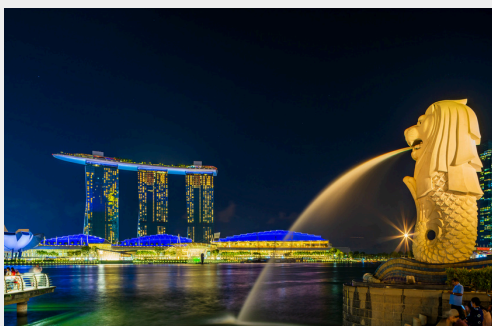


Professor Nasr and MEI Chairman Joseph Liow engaged in discussions on the state of Iran, the Middle East and US-Israeli miscalculations, among others. Photo: MEI

LOOK AHEAD: WHAT TO KEEP A WATCH ON

Riyadh to Store Oil in Singapore

Saudi Arabia plans to store crude oil at Singapore's Jurong Rock Caverns from the second half of 2027 to strengthen supply security in the region, energy ministers from both countries said on Monday. This move comes after the US-Israeli war with Iran severely disrupted energy supplies to Asia shipped through the Strait of Hormuz, prompting countries to draw down inventories and raising concerns about stockpile levels globally. Asia imported two-thirds of its oil supplies from the Middle East before the war.



This will strengthen Singapore's energy security and resilience while enhancing Saudi Arabia's crude oil supply chain in the region. Photo: Canva

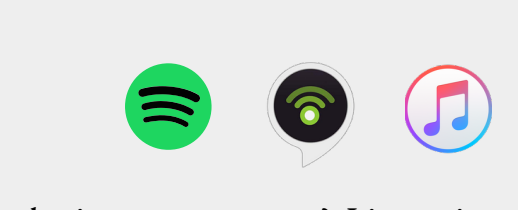
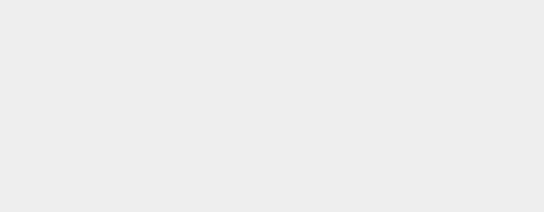
Turkey Builds Asia-Europe Rail Corridor

Turkey is accelerating railway projects worth approximately US\$10 billion to establish a freight corridor connecting China and Europe through its territory by 2031, as wars and geopolitical tensions disrupt traditional trade routes, the Japan-based Nikkei Asia business and economic news publication reported on Thursday. The investments are intended to eliminate bottlenecks along the Middle Corridor.



Ankara is also pursuing connections through Iraq and the Middle East as it seeks to become a major international logistics hub. Photo: Canva

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