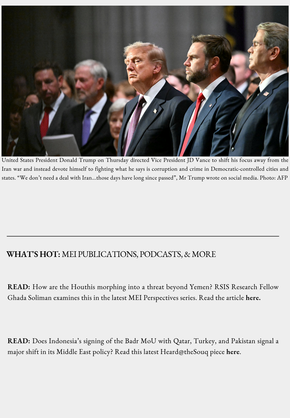
YOUR WEEKLY GUIDE TO THE MIDDLE EAST | 9 - 13 November 2026

MEIWeekly.



United States President Donald Trump on Thursday directed Vice President JD Vance to shift his focus away from the Iran war and instead devote himself to fighting what he says is corruption and crime in Democratic-controlled cities and states. "We don't need a deal with Iran...those days have long since passed", Mr Trump wrote on social media. Photo: AFP

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

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

READ: Does Indonesia's signing of the Badr MoU with Qatar, Turkey, and Pakistan signal a major shift in its Middle East policy? Read this latest Heard@theSouq piece **here**.

WHAT'S NEWS: THE BIG HEADLINES THIS WEEK

Trump Says No Deal Needed on Iran War

US President Donald Trump said that the White House is no longer seeking a deal to end the war with Iran and ordered Vice President JD Vance to focus on domestic issues instead. Mr Vance had been reportedly talking to intermediaries in Iran and Qatar about restarting negotiations to end the war.

Eisenkot Tapped to Form Israeli Government

President Isaac Herzog selected Mr Gadi Eisenkot to form a new government after he received more support from Knesset members than Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu during recent consultations. He now has up to six weeks to build a coalition before the mandate is passed on to another candidate.



Mr. Eisenkot faces a series of difficult choices. Among them, he could join forces with the two Arab-led parties, though some of the right-wing Jewish allies in his bloc have said they would not enter a government that relies on their support. Photo: AFP

Houthis Attack Saudi Arabia's Pipeline, Oil Facility

The rebels claimed attacks on a pumping station on the Saudi East-West pipeline, an oil facility in the Red Sea city of Yanbu, and an Aramco building in Riyadh. The latest escalation threatened the strategic Bab el-Mandeb Strait, a key shipping route linking the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden.

CALENDAR: MEI EVENTS

ICYMI: MEI-Bisa Seminar Series 2026

Organised jointly by MEI and the British International Studies Association (Bisa), this four-part seminar series examined the cascading consequences of the US-Israeli war against Iran that erupted in early 2026. Across four thematic sessions, the discussions traced the conflict's impact from Iran's domestic political transformation and the restructuring of regional security, through the disruption of global energy markets and Gulf economic stability, to the broader reconfiguration of the international order. By convening leading scholars from Asia, Europe, the Middle East, and Australia, the series provided a comprehensive, multi-layered analysis of a major geopolitical crisis and its far-reaching ramifications. To watch the full series or listen to the podcast, click **here**.



Gulf states like the UAE and Qatar have urged a reset and a new mindset in dealing with Tehran. Photo: AFP

LOOK AHEAD: WHAT TO KEEP A WATCH ON

EU Plans Doha Defence Talks to Strengthen Gulf Security Ties

The European Union and Qatar are deepening their defence cooperation, and "security is fundamental in the current geopolitical context and it's a mutual interest", the EU's new ambassador to Qatar Antonino Maggiore told reporters in Doha. Mr Maggiore described the EU's defence cooperation push in Qatar and the Gulf states as having two main objectives: connecting private defence industries through a new platform and presenting the EU's common defence industry policies to Qatar and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries.



The EU wants to build on existing defence partnerships between Qatar and individual European countries, including France, Italy, Spain and Germany. Photo: Canva

GCC to Set Up Advanced Military Command Base in Kuwait

The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) agreed to establish an advanced headquarters for its Unified Military Command in Kuwait and allocate "appropriate" military forces to it. The announcement followed the 23rd meeting of the GCC's Joint Defence Council, attended by defence ministers from the bloc's six members: Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the UAE. The decision comes after the US-Israeli war on Iran brought missile and drone attacks to Gulf states, disrupted trade and exposed the vulnerability of their energy infrastructure. Relentless Houthi attacks on Saudi Arabia have also amplified concerns in the region.



Analysts stressed that closer Gulf military cooperation does not necessarily mean a retreat from existing partnerships with Washington. Photo: AFP

Follow us for the latest updates!

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

Copyright © 2026 Middle East Institute, National University of Singapore. All rights reserved. Middle East Institute Events and Publications.

Our mailing address is:
Middle East Institute, National University of Singapore
29 Heng Mui Keng Terrace
Block B, #06-06
Singapore 119620
Singapore

Subscribe to our mailing list here.