



MANOHAR PARRIKAR INSTITUTE FOR
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मनोहर पर्रिकर रक्षा अध्ययन एवं विश्लेषण संस्थान

WEST ASIA DIGEST

Monthly Compilation of News Items from West Asia

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Protests erupt in Iran

Large-scale protests have erupted in several parts of Iran following the death of Mahsa Amini, a 22-year-old Iranian woman, in police custody on September 16, 2022. Amini was detained by the country's morality police for “allegedly violating the strict law requiring women to cover their hair with a hijab.” Her death triggered widespread protests in Iran which led the authorities to impose restrictions on access to the internet and use force to disperse the protesters. The massive use of force by security forces resulted in a number of civilian casualties. Responding to the situation, the US has imposed sanctions on “Iran’s Morality Police for abuse and violence against Iranian women and the violation of the rights of peaceful protestors.”

Mohammed bin Salman named Prime Minister of Saudi Arabia

In a major cabinet reshuffle, Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman has been named the country’s Prime Minister, as per a royal decree issued by King Salman. In the cabinet reshuffle, Mohammed bin Salman who formerly served as the defence minister is now being replaced by his younger brother Khaled bin Salman. The decree states that the King, who remains head of state, will continue to chair cabinet meetings he attends.

Israeli Prime Minister meets Turkish President

Israeli Prime Minister Yair Lapid met with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan

on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly session in New York on September 20, 2022. This was the first meeting of an Israeli prime minister with the Turkish president since 2008, highlighting a positive development between the two countries. During the meeting, both the leaders discussed ways to fight against terrorism, intelligence cooperation, economic and energy cooperation between the two countries.

The 32nd OPEC ministerial meeting

The 32nd Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and non-OPEC ministerial meeting took place on September 5, 2022, where they decided to make a 0.1mb/d (roughly 100,000 barrels/day) production cut for the month of October. This marks a reversal of the decision taken at the 31st ministerial meeting of implementing a 0.1mb/d production hike. The Meeting emphasised growing concerns over the rising market volatility and increased uncertainties. The decision was also made amidst the looming threat of a global economic slowdown, the G7 price cap on Russian oil, uncertainty over the US-Iran nuclear deal and the Russia-Ukraine war.

Saudi Arabia to invest over US\$ 186 billion to develop a green economy

The Saudi Minister of Finance, Mohammed Al Jadaan, announced an investment worth over US\$ 186 billion for the development of a green economy in the country. This is intended to create quality jobs and provide a huge investment opportunity for the private sector. Jadaan stressed that a

sustainable economy and green transformation have a special place in Saudi Vision 2030 and the country has committed to achieving zero emissions neutrality by 2060. The Saudi Power Procurement Company also announced floating five Renewable energy projects to produce electricity. The capacity produced by these projects will reach 3,300 megawatts, including 3 projects to utilize wind energy and two solar energy projects. These projects are a part of Saudi Arabia's target of reaching the best energy mix to produce electricity.

Prime Minister Modi meets Turkish President Erdogan

On September 16, 2022, Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi, met the President of Türkiye, Recep Tayyip Erdogan on the sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Summit in Samarkand. During the meeting, both the leaders reviewed bilateral relations and discussed ways to further enhance the same in diverse sectors. In addition, they also “exchanged views on regional and global developments.” Both acknowledged the importance of maintaining regular contact for the benefit of the region.

India's Defence Minister visits Egypt

Defence Minister of India, Rajnath Singh, was on a three-day visit to Egypt and met with Egyptian President Abdel Fattah El Sisi and Defence Minister Mohamed Zaki. Singh discussed a wide range of issues focusing on deepening defence relations

between the two countries with Zaki and signed an MoU on defence cooperation. He also met with Egyptian Sisi and discussed ways to boost military and security ties, exclusively in the field of “joint manufacturing, transfer and localization of technology.” The visit has been a significant move in the direction of strengthening defence and security cooperation between the two countries.

External Affairs Minister visits Saudi Arabia

External Affairs Minister, Dr. S. Jaishankar, visited Saudi Arabia to co-chair the inaugural Ministerial Meeting of the Committee on Political, Security, Social and Cultural Cooperation (PSSC), which was formed under the framework of the India-Saudi Arabia Strategic Partnership Council. During the visit, Jaishankar met with his counterpart Prince Faisal bin Farhan and both the leaders reviewed the bilateral ties and deliberated on the progress of “four Joint Working Groups of the PSSC Committee, namely, Political and Consular, Legal and Security, Social and Cultural and Joint Committee on Defence Cooperation.” In addition, they also discussed the major regional and international issues, “including their cooperation at the UN, G20 and in the Gulf Cooperation Council.” During the visit, Jaishankar also met with Nayef Falah Mubarak Al Hajraf, Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). India signed an MoU on the mechanism of consultations with the GCC.