



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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Oman's Sultan Haitham bin Tarik visits India

On December 16, 2023, Sultan Haitham bin Tarik of Oman, accompanied by a high-level delegation, undertook his first State visit to India, upon an invitation from Indian President Droupadi Murmu. Sultan Haitham met with Prime Minister Narendra Modi and held discussions on a number of bilateral and regional issues. India and Oman signed key agreements during the visit including a cultural MoU between the Ministries of Cultures, a tech-focused MoU between MEITY and MTCIT on IT, one employment-related agreement and a collaboration between India's Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU) and Oman's National Centre for Financial Information (NCFI) on countering money laundering and terrorism financing. Additionally, Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) and Oman's Dhofar University inked a MoU for the establishment of the ICCR Chair of Indian Studies.

Prime Minister Modi attends COP-28 Summit in Dubai

Prime Minister Modi participated in the COP-28 Presidency's Session on "Transforming Climate Finance" in Dubai. COP-28 focused on making climate finance more available, accessible and affordable to developing countries. The leaders participating in the COP-28 adopted the "UAE Declaration on a New Global Climate Finance Framework." Modi voiced the concerns of the Global South and reiterated the urgency of making the means of implementation, particularly climate finance, available to the developing countries to achieve their climate ambitions. He called for the COP-28 to

deliver on significant issues relating to the climate finance. On the sidelines of COP-28 Summit, Prime Minister Modi met with the Emirati President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan and exchanged views on bilateral and regional issues.

India co-hosts Global Green Credit Initiative with the UAE

Prime Minister Modi, together with the UAE President Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, co-hosted the high-level event on 'Green Credits Programme' at COP-28 in Dubai. The Green Credit Initiative has been conceptualised as a mechanism to incentivise voluntary pro-planet actions, as an effective response to the challenge of climate change. It envisions the issue of Green Credits for plantations on waste/degraded lands and river catchment areas, to rejuvenate and revive natural eco-systems. A web platform, to serve as a repository of policies and best practices that incentivize environment-friendly actions, was also launched. This global initiative aims to facilitate global collaboration, cooperation and partnership through exchange of knowledge, experiences and best practices in planning, implementation and monitoring of environment positive actions through programs/mechanisms like Green Credits. Modi invited all nations to join this Initiative.

12th Arab Energy Conference takes place in Doha

The 12th Arab Energy Conference took place in Doha from 11-12 December 2023 under the theme "Energy and Arab Cooperation." The Conference, organised by the Organisation of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC), examined

the international developments in energy markets and their implications for the Arab energy sector; the efforts of Arab countries to tackle the challenges of energy security; issues of energy, environment and sustainable development. Topics relating to Arab and global energy resources, downstream industries and energy demand management in Arab countries were discussed. The Conference concluded with the adoption of a final statement highlighting the importance of energy security for Arab countries, the need for a balanced and sustainable energy transition and the importance of Arab cooperation in the energy sector.

Houthis strike Israel's Eilat & commercial vessel in the Red Sea

Houthis have announced that it has conducted drone attacks on Israel's port city of Eilat and launched missiles at an MSC United Vessel in the Red Sea after it rejected three warning calls. The United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operation (UKMTO) said that drones did not cause any damage to the ship. Houthi attacks in the Red Sea are taking place amid simmering tensions as Houthis have expressed their solidarity with Palestinians. According to the US Central Command, since 19 October 2023, Houthis have attempted 22 attacks on international shipping. The US is responding to the attacks under the Operation Prosperity Guardian with participation of several other countries to keep the Red Sea open.

Security Council adopts resolution on ongoing crisis in Gaza

On 22 December 2023, the United Nations Security Council has adopted a resolution on the ongoing crisis in Gaza, with 13 votes

in favour, and the US and Russia abstaining. The resolution, among other points, demands immediate, safe and unhindered delivery of humanitarian assistance directly to the Palestinian civilian population throughout the Gaza Strip. The resolution reaffirmed the obligations of the parties to the conflict under international humanitarian law, especially regarding the protection of civilians and civilian objects, safety of humanitarian personnel and the provision of humanitarian assistance. The Council demanded that the parties "allow, facilitate and enable" the immediate, safe and unhindered delivery of humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian people throughout the Gaza Strip. It also requested the UN Secretary-General to appoint a Senior Humanitarian and Reconstruction Coordinator with responsibility for "facilitating, coordinating, monitoring and verifying" in Gaza. It also called for the "expeditious" establishment of a UN mechanism to accelerate aid consignments to Gaza.

Sentences reduced in the Dahra Global case in Qatar

The Court of Appeal in Qatar has commuted sentences in the Dahra Global case. India's Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) press brief noted that Indian government has stood with the family members since the beginning of the matter and continues to extend all consular and legal assistance. India has continued to take up the matter with the Qatari authorities. Since detailed judgment is awaited, India is in close touch with the legal team and family members to further decide on next possible steps.