

# MEIWeekly.



During United States Vice President JD Vance’s visit to the nation on Wednesday, the Israeli Knesset passed two largely symbolic votes backing annexation in the West Bank. While mentioning that someone had told him that this was a symbolic political stunt with no practical significance, he called it a “very stupid political stunt”. Photo: AFP

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

**READ:** Is Dubai heading toward another property crash? Early signs of overheating echo the 2008–09 crisis, making timely regulation and oversight crucial. Read the article [here](#).

**READ:** This article argues that the latest Gaza peace plan is pragmatic but incomplete — halting hostilities short-term while leaving Palestinian statehood, governance, and regional stability unresolved. Read it [here](#).

## WHAT’S NEWS: THE BIG HEADLINES THIS WEEK

### Trump Says He Will Not Allow West Bank Annexation

“It won’t happen because I gave my word to the Arab countries”, said US President Donald Trump, warning that Israel would lose Washington’s support if it did. This prompted Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to distance himself from the votes, which angered the US.

### Leaked Wedding Video Tarnishes Hard-Line Iranian Official

Rear Adm. Ali Shamkhani was accused of leading a double life after walking his daughter — who wore a low-cut, strapless dress — down the aisle at her wedding. The video, which went viral, showed that other women in attendance, including his wife, were also without hijabs.



Rear Adm. Ali Shamkhani is one of Iran’s most senior defence and national security officials and a confidant of Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei. Until recently, he also oversaw nuclear talks with the White House, shepherded the enforcement of strict Islamic rules on women and girls, and ordered violent crackdowns on protesters. Photo: AFP

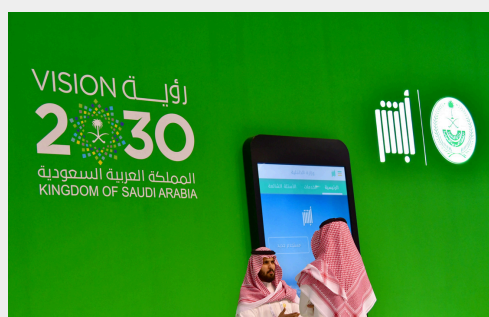
### Islamic State Rises Again in Syria, Filling a Void Left by US

Now operating as a decentralised mobile insurgency, the terrorist group is exploiting reduced American presence and the collapse of Bashar al-Assad’s regime to recruit and expand. It is newly armed after raiding weapons depots late last year after rebels took over Damascus.

## CALENDAR: MEI EVENTS

### S R Nathan Distinguished Lecture 2025

Your annual lecture on the modern Middle East is here. This year, the focus is on Saudi Arabia’s Vision 2030, one of the region’s most ambitious national transformations, driving economic diversification and social reform. The Middle East Institute will host HE Mr Mohammed Khalid Alyahya, adviser to the Saudi Foreign Minister, to discuss these changes and how the Kingdom is positioning itself as a regional leader. What’s more? Investors and firms — here’s your chance to explore Riyadh’s increasingly open business environment. The lecture will be held in-person and online via Zoom on Monday, 17 November, from 4:00 to 5:30 PM (SGT). No time to waste — sign up [here](#).



The central figure and driving force behind the project is Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, who introduced Vision 2030 in 2016. Photo: AFP

## LOOK AHEAD: WHAT TO KEEP A WATCH ON

### Erdogan Wraps Up Gulf Tour, Seals 24 Deals

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan concluded a three-day Gulf tour on Thursday, visiting Kuwait, Qatar, and Oman, which resulted in the signing of 24 agreements, memoranda, and joint statements. During his trip, Mr Erdogan emphasised the importance of preserving the fragile ceasefire in Gaza, reiterated that a two-state solution is essential for lasting peace, called for unity among Muslim nations, and reaffirmed Ankara’s willingness to cooperate with Arab partners to build a better future for Syria.



Talks between him and other leaders throughout the trip were focused on strengthening bilateral ties and expanding cooperation on regional and global issues, including Gaza. Photo: AFP

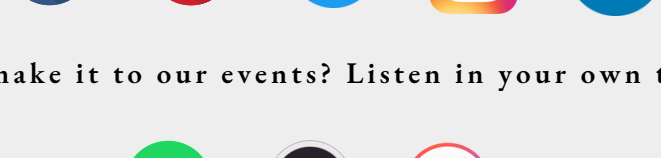
### Opec Ready to Raise Oil Output After New Sanctions on Russia

Kuwait’s Oil Minister Tariq Al-Roumi said on Thursday that the organisation is ready to increase production by rolling back its output cuts if needed to address market shortfalls following new US sanctions on Russian oil majors. He added that he expects demand to shift toward the Gulf and the Middle East as a result of the sanctions.



Global oil prices rose by 5% on Thursday following the news of sanctions, which also prompted India to consider cutting Russian imports. Photo: AFP

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