

MEIWeekly.



Despite a ceasefire, Israel killed Hezbollah's chief of staff, Haitham Ali al-Tabtabai, in an airstrike on Beirut on Sunday. After the strike, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said his nation "will not allow Hezbollah to rebuild its power" and called on the Lebanese government to fulfil its commitment to disarm the group. Photo: AFP

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

READ: Once an exotic and faraway destination for Chinese travellers, the Middle East has become Beijing's new travel fascination, notes MEI Research Fellow Lin Jing. Read the article [here](#).

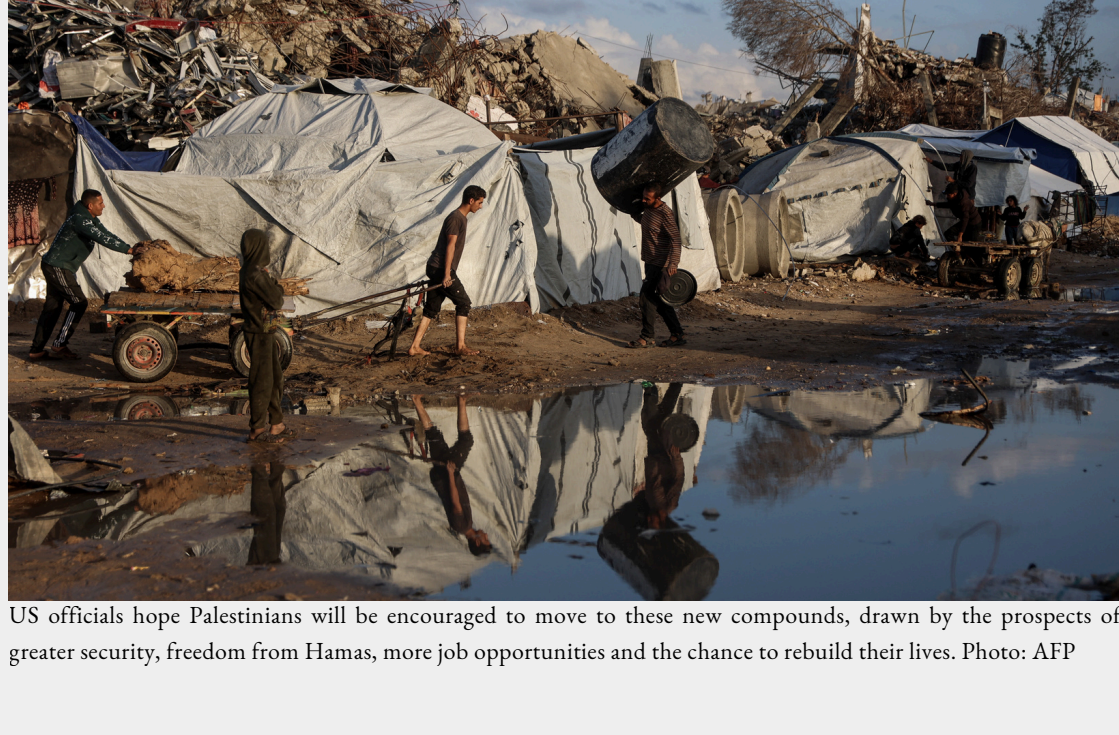
WHAT'S NEWS: THE BIG HEADLINES THIS WEEK

Israel Kills Top Hezbollah Official

Hezbollah confirmed the death of Haitham Ali al-Tabtabai, adding that Israel had crossed a "red line" in carrying out the strike. The Lebanese health ministry that said at least five people were killed and 28 others wounded in the strike, which hit a building in the Dahieh district.

US Plans Compounds to House Palestinians

The Trump administration is pushing for the rapid construction of residential compounds to house Palestinians in Israeli-controlled parts of the Gaza strip. This plan raised questions about whether it could entrench the partition of Gaza into Israeli- and Hamas-controlled zones.



US officials hope Palestinians will be encouraged to move to these new compounds, drawn by the prospects of greater security, freedom from Hamas, more job opportunities and the chance to rebuild their lives. Photo: AFP

Rocket Strike Hits Iraqi Gas Field, Cuts Power in Kurdistan

The strike at Khor Mor gas field came shortly after midnight and was the latest in a string of attacks targeting Kurdish-run oil and gas infrastructure in recent months. Iraqi and Kurdish officials have privately blamed these attacks on local militias aligned with neighbouring Iran.

CALENDAR: MEI EVENTS

S R Nathan Distinguished Lecture 2025

The stage is set for the S R Nathan Lecture next Monday! Discover how far Saudi Arabia has come since launching Vision 2030. From diversifying its economy beyond oil and empowering women in the workforce to hosting world-class entertainment events, the Kingdom has made remarkable strides. Drawing on his position as Adviser to the Saudi Foreign Minister, Mr Mohammed Khalid Alyahya (pictured) will discuss these reforms, the Kingdom's next steps, and how businesses can seize emerging opportunities there. This event will be held in person and online via Zoom on Monday, 1 December 2025, from 4pm – 5:30pm (SGT). Grab your spot [here](#).



This lecture will also highlight how investors and firms from abroad can engage with the Kingdom's increasingly open business environment. Photo: MEI

LOOK AHEAD: WHAT TO KEEP A WATCH ON

Pope Leo's Visit to Turkey and Lebanon Underway

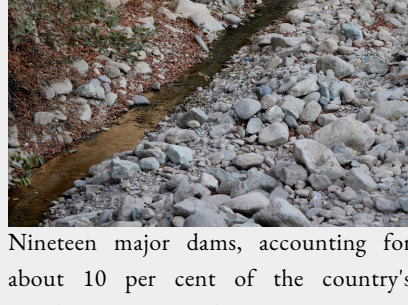
He kicked off the first foreign trip of his papacy on Thursday, arriving in Muslim-majority Turkey for a visit aimed at showcasing his interest in dialogue with other faiths and cooperation with other Christian denominations. On Sunday, he is expected to fly to Lebanon, home to the Arab world's largest Catholic community, to meet with church and government officials there.



The pope's visit to Lebanon will force him to confront one of the world's most fraught geopolitical contexts. Photo: AFP

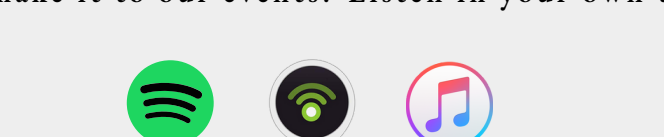
Taps are Running Dry in Iran

Faced with a perfect storm of weather woes and decades of mismanagement, Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian issued a warning to his country that the situation could deteriorate even further. "We've run short of water. If it doesn't rain, we in Tehran ... must start rationing," he said. "Even if we do ration and it still does not rain, then we will have no water at all. "They [citizens] must evacuate Tehran", he added.

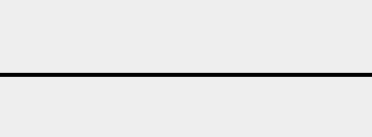


Nineteen major dams, accounting for about 10 per cent of the country's supplies, are reportedly dry. Photo: AFP

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