

MEIWeekly.



Mr Zohran Mamdani won New York City’s mayoral election on Tuesday, becoming the city’s first Muslim mayor. His views on Israel were a flash point during his campaign, and his victory drew sharp criticism from some leaders in Tel Aviv, who said the city is “hand[ing] over its keys to a Hamas supporter” and entering an “abyss”. 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](#).

READ: Following the imposition of “snapback” sanctions, what lies ahead for Iran’s leadership? MEI Research Affiliate Zeynab Malakouti offers her analysis and how the nuclear issue is expected to evolve. Read it [here](#).

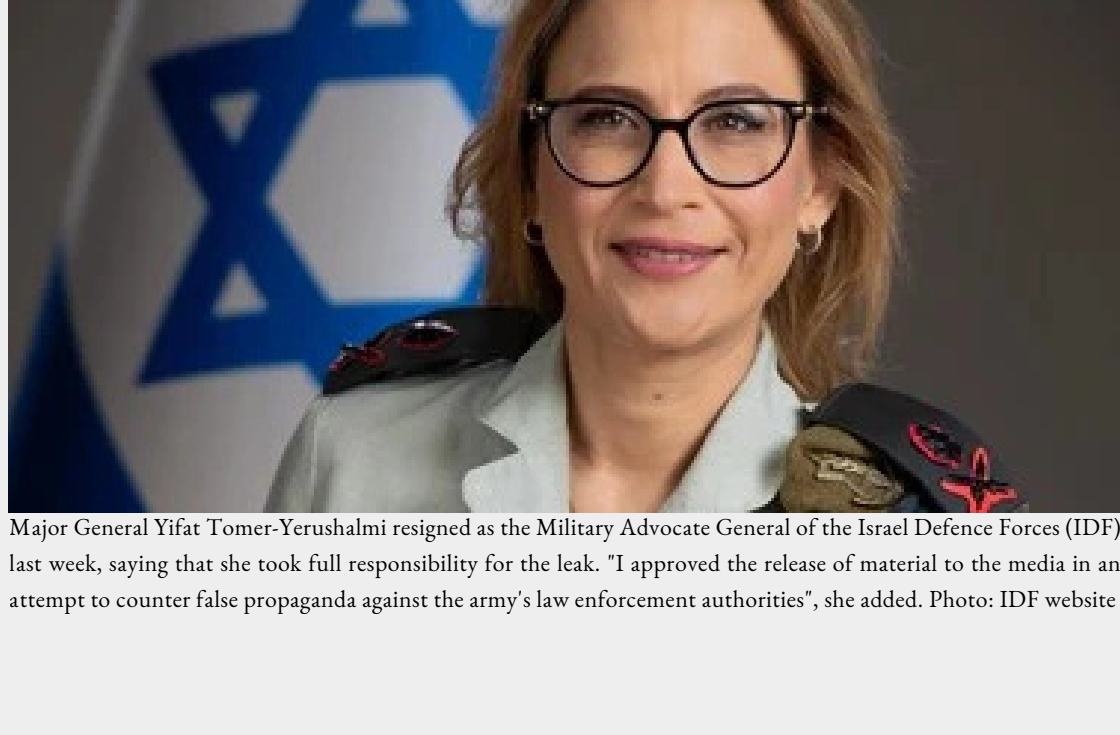
WHAT’S NEWS: THE BIG HEADLINES THIS WEEK

Intense Reactions in Israel After Mamdani’s New York Triumph

Israeli National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir called Mr Mamdani “a Hamas supporter, an Israel hater and an antisemite”, while another leader urged “New York Jews who want to survive” to emigrate “to where they belong — Israel”, adding that “the Big Apple has fallen.”

Israeli Military's Ex-top Lawyer Arrested Over Video Leak

A political showdown deepened in Tel Aviv after a video allegedly showing severe abuse of a Palestinian detainee by Israeli soldiers was leaked. Five reservists were charged with aggravated abuse and causing serious bodily harm as the fallout from the video intensifies by the day.



Major General Yifat Tomer-Yerushalmi resigned as the Military Advocate General of the Israel Defence Forces (IDF) last week, saying that she took full responsibility for the leak. “I approved the release of material to the media in an attempt to counter false propaganda against the army’s law enforcement authorities”, she added. Photo: IDF website

Saudi Arabia’s F35 Jets Request Clears Key Pentagon Hurdles

A sale would mark a significant policy shift, potentially shifting the military balance in the Middle East and testing Washington's definition of maintaining Israel's “qualitative military edge”. This also comes ahead of Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman’s visit to Washington.

CALENDAR: MEI EVENTS

S R Nathan Distinguished Lecture 2025

Mark your calendars for 1 December 2025! The Middle East Institute’s annual lecture on the modern Middle East will focus this year on Saudi Arabia’s Vision 2030 — one of the region’s most ambitious initiatives for economic diversification and social reform. Mr Mohammed Khalid Alyahya, adviser to the Saudi Foreign Minister, will discuss the Kingdom’s transformative agenda and its emerging role as a regional leader. Investors and enterprises, be on high alert: this is your chance to get firsthand insights into Riyadh’s increasingly open and dynamic business environment. This lecture will be held in-person and online via Zoom from 4:00 to 5:30 PM (SGT). Don’t miss out — register [here](#).



Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman launched Vision 2030 in 2016 as a strategic blueprint for social, cultural, and economic transformation to reduce the Kingdom’s reliance on oil. Photo: AFP

LOOK AHEAD: WHAT TO KEEP A WATCH ON

US Seeking UN Approval for Gaza Security Force

According to sources, the White House sent several United Nations (UN) Security Council members a draft resolution on Monday for the establishment of an international force in Gaza for a duration of at least two years. The draft resolution “would give the US and other participating countries a broad mandate to govern Gaza and provide security through the end of 2027, with the possibility of extensions after that”.



Countries such as Indonesia, Azerbaijan, Egypt, and Turkey have expressed their willingness to contribute troops to the coalition, which will be named as the International Security Force (ISF). Photo: AFP

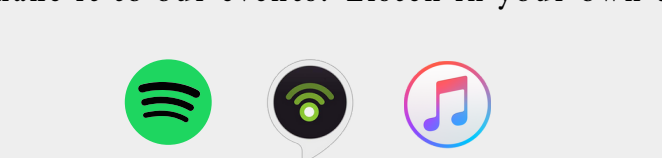
Turkey Enters ‘New Phase’ in PKK Peace Process

President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said on Wednesday that Turkey had entered a “new phase” in efforts to end Kurdish militant violence and signalled he was open to the idea of jailed Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) leader Abdullah Ocalan addressing lawmakers. Mr Erdogan said he held “very constructive” talks last week with senior pro-Kurdish Peoples’ Equality and Democracy Party (DEM) leaders - who urged the idea of Ocalan addressing a Parliamentary commission on PKK disarmament - and he urged all actors to contribute.



“It appears we have reached a new crossroads on the path towards a Turkey free of terrorism”, Mr Erdogan told his ruling Party lawmakers”. Photo: AFP

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