

In this week's *Türkiye in Focus*;

- Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan attended the Washington meeting between the Syrian and U.S. delegations, signalling closer diplomatic coordination on regional issues.
- The long-awaited indictment against Istanbul Mayor Ekrem İmamoğlu has been formally submitted to court, reigniting political debate across Türkiye.
- Türkiye's betting and match-fixing probe is widening, with new arrests revealing deepening concerns over corruption in professional football.

Foreign Minister Fidan Joined the Meeting Between Syrian and U.S. Delegations in Washington

The meeting between Syrian President Ahmad al-Sharaa and U.S. President Donald Trump in Washington marks a historic milestone, the first time in 70 years that a Syrian leader has been hosted at the White House. The symbolism of this encounter extends far beyond the usual diplomatic pleasantries. As the Middle East undergoes yet another phase of reconfiguration following the Arab Spring and, more recently, the post-October 7 convulsion, Syria's internal transformation under its new leadership has become a focal point of regional and global attention. The new Syrian administration has made it clear that lifting sanctions and restoring national territorial integrity form the twin pillars of its foreign policy agenda.

Against this backdrop, Israel's destabilising activities in Syria have become a persistent obstacle to both internal recovery and regional stability. This makes direct engagement between Damascus and Washington all the more significant. Although his participation initially went unannounced, it later became clear through statements by Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan to domestic media that he had participated in at least part of the talks. This revelation underscores the convergence between Washington's and Ankara's visions for Syria, one centred on the preservation of Syria's territorial integrity

through diplomatic means. Fidan emphasised that critical issues were discussed.

Should sanctions be eased and Syria's integrity be ensured, Türkiye's capacity to contribute constructively to Syria's rebuilding process would grow substantially, potentially setting the stage for a more stable regional order. In this sense, the Washington meeting may have laid the groundwork for tangible progress toward Syria's full reintegration into the international community.



(Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs - Anadolu Agency)

İmamoğlu Indictment Submitted to Court

A major development unfolded this week in one of Türkiye's most closely followed political cases. The long-awaited indictment in the so-called "*Ekrem İmamoğlu Criminal Organization for Illicit Gain*" investigation was officially submitted to the court, reigniting heated debates across the political spectrum after its details were leaked to the press. According to prosecutors, the alleged organisation's overarching aim was to enable İmamoğlu's gradual takeover of the main opposition Republican People's Party (CHP) and eventually pave his way to the presidency.

The approximately 4,000-page indictment - encompassing charges against 402 individuals - focuses on claims that a share of revenues from public tenders and commercial

deals was illicitly funnelled into what prosecutors describe as a "system" serving the organisation's objectives. It also includes allegations that personal data was misused through certain municipal programs for the group's benefit. Notably, the document asserts that these activities date back to 2015, during İmamoğlu's tenure as mayor of Beylikdüzü, a district of Istanbul. Among the more striking claims is that some media outlets and journalists were allegedly financed to advance the group's interests.

The magnitude of the case has polarised public opinion. While CHP leaders have dismissed the charges as baseless and politically motivated, figures aligned with the government have hailed the investigation as "the corruption case of the century." Legal experts suggest that given the scale and complexity of the file, the judicial process is likely to stretch over a long period, with each stage closely scrutinised by observers.

Beyond the courtroom, the indictment already reverberates on Türkiye's political climate. The CHP has placed the İmamoğlu trial at the forefront of its political agenda, a move that some analysts argue risks locking the party into a reactive posture and undermining its capacity to mount a constructive opposition. However, the party's insistence on this case also ensures that İmamoğlu remains central in the party's political narrative. Depending on how the process develops, the opposition may end up harmed by the very issue it is attempting to confront.



(Ömer Taha Çetin - Anadolu Agency)

Betting and Match-Fixing Investigation Expands

A major investigation has shaken Turkish football, opening what could become one of the most far-reaching scandals in the sport's recent history. The Turkish Football Federation (TFF) confirmed that the first phase of the inquiry uncovered evidence of players, referees, and club executives engaging in betting activities. This is considered a clear violation of professional regulations that prohibit anyone directly involved in football from gambling. While disciplinary sanctions from the Federation are expected, the situation has escalated, with some individuals suspected of placing bets on matches in which they were directly involved, triggering criminal proceedings for potential match-fixing.

As the TFF expanded its probe and Istanbul's Chief Public Prosecutor's Office intervened, eight individuals, including the president of Eyüpspor, were arrested on charges of match manipulation and corruption. Observers believe this is only the beginning of a much broader investigation that could expose deeper structural problems within Turkish football.

Given football's unmatched popularity in Türkiye and its close ties with the business world, the unfolding scandal is drawing intense scrutiny. Beyond the realm of sport, the case also resonates with Türkiye's broader efforts to combat financial misconduct, highlighting the intricate overlap between ethics, governance, and power in one of the country's most influential sectors.



(Emrah Yorulmaz - Anadolu Agency)

Highlights

- Newly elected President of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, Tufan Erhürman, paid his first official overseas visit to Ankara, where he held talks with President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, underscoring the close ties between the two nations.
- The tragic crash of a Turkish military transport plane in Georgia, resulting in the loss of 20 soldiers, has been met with nationwide grief and mourning across Türkiye.
- At a joint press conference with Badr Abdelatty, Egypt's Minister of Foreign Affairs, following the Türkiye-Egypt Joint Planning Group meeting in Ankara on 12 November 2025, Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan urged Israel to match Hamas's stated willingness to make the Gaza ceasefire permanent.

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No Edition for the Next Two Weeks

Please be informed that there won't be an edition of *Türkiye in Focus* for the next **two weeks** as we take a short break. We'll be back afterward with fresh perspectives and updates on the latest developments in Türkiye. Thank you for your continued support and understanding!