

In this week's *Türkiye in Focus*;

- The rise in tensions between the SDF and Damascus is being closely monitored by Ankara.
- During a phone call with the Saudi leadership, President Erdoğan said that Türkiye is ready to contribute to efforts to ensure stability and peace in Yemen.
- The AK Party's strength in parliament expanded this week with new joiners.

Ankara Closely Monitors Developments in Syria

Observers say that eyes in the "Terror-Free Türkiye" process are firmly fixed on Syria, where developments are widely seen as intertwined with the trajectory of the domestic initiative. Talks over Syria's unity and territorial integrity are not viewed in isolation; rather, they are treated as part of a broader regional equation that directly shapes Türkiye's internal security calculus. In this reading, progress or setbacks across the border are expected to reverberate inside Türkiye.

For Ankara, safeguarding Syria's territorial integrity remains a central priority, particularly adherence to the 10 March 2025 agreement signed between the SDF and Damascus. This framework is regarded as a key reference point for stabilisation efforts. At the start of last week, representatives of the two sides met once again, with officials confirming that no final outcome was reached but that contacts would continue, signalling a process still very much in flux.

Midweek developments, however, underscored how fragile the situation remains. Syrian government forces announced a limited operation targeting three neighbourhoods in Aleppo

under SDF control, introducing a sharper military dimension to the standoff. Any escalation on the ground is being closely watched in Türkiye, where policymakers are weighing how renewed tensions in northern Syria could feed back into the wider security environment at home.



(Bakr Al Kasem - Anadolu Agency)

President Erdoğan Holds Phone Call with the Saudi Leadership on Developments in Yemen



(TCCB - Anadolu Agency)

President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan held a phone call with the Saudi leadership amid renewed regional attention on Yemen, underscoring a shared commitment to preserving the country's territorial integrity and preventing further fragmentation. The exchange highlighted a clear convergence between Ankara and Riyadh, both of which view Yemen's unity as essential to regional stability at a time when the conflict remains unresolved.

Türkiye has consistently opposed the division of states across the region and supported political solutions that safeguard territorial cohesion. In this respect, analysts note that Ankara's position intersects with Saudi Arabia's approach, reflecting a broader convergence of strategic outlooks between the two countries in recent years.

While Türkiye and Saudi Arabia once found themselves on different sides of regional debates, their relationship has gradually shifted toward a more pragmatic, interest-based framework, with stability and state integrity emerging as shared priorities.

As part of this broader diplomatic engagement, President Erdoğan also held a separate phone call with the leadership of the United Arab Emirates, reiterating Türkiye's readiness to support dialogue and de-escalation efforts. The call was seen as a continuation of Ankara's balanced approach to regional diplomacy, aimed at maintaining constructive ties with all key actors while prioritising stability and cooperation.

Three MPs from Different Parties Join the AK Party

This week's defections saw three MPs - one each from the CHP, DEVA Party and the Future Party - cross over to the AK Party, lifting the ruling party's parliamentary strength to 275 seats. Since the aftermath of the 2023 elections, a total of seven lawmakers have joined the AK Party from other parties, a trend quietly but steadily reshaping the balance in the Grand National Assembly.

Politically, these shifts carry at least two notable implications. First, parliamentary arithmetic is becoming increasingly relevant as expectations grow that debates over a new constitution will be revived. A stronger AK Party presence in parliament will significantly ease the government's hand if it seeks to pursue constitutional change through the legislature rather than through more contentious routes. Second, in a broader sense, the transfers underline the continued contraction of parties outside the AK Party-CHP axis. In a presidential system where executive power hinges on securing 50 per cent plus one of the votes, the ambitions of smaller parties are increasingly colliding with electoral reality.

The steady loss of members and MPs by DEVA, the Future Party and the İYİ Party — largely to the AK Party and the CHP — is fuelling the perception that Türkiye's political competition is drifting toward a de facto two-party order, signalling a new democratic equilibrium.



(İsmail Kaplan - Anadolu Agency)

Highlights

- Following the U.S. announcement that Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro and his wife had been "captured," Türkiye's Ministry of Foreign Affairs stated that Türkiye attaches importance to Venezuela's stability and to the peace and well-being of the Venezuelan people and called on all parties to act with restraint. President Erdoğan also underscored that Türkiye's sensitivities were conveyed during his call with his U.S. counterpart.
- Türkiye's Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan attended the Coalition of the Willing summit in Paris on January 6th, where discussions focused on Ukraine peace efforts, draft proposals, and potential security guarantees.
- Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim paid a three-day official visit to Türkiye. During a joint press conference with President Erdoğan, the two leaders underscored that defence industry cooperation would continue. A series of agreements aimed at enhancing bilateral relations were signed, including the establishment of a High-Level Strategic Cooperation Council.

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