

In this week's *Türkiye in Focus*;

- The investigation into the suspicious death of a former National Intelligence Organisation (MİT) official draws one of Türkiye's best-known action series into the spotlight.
- Türkiye's PISA 2025 results suggest that the fruits of education reforms are beginning to emerge.
- Regulatory authorities have announced measures in response to recent volatility on Borsa İstanbul.

Intelligence Officer's Death Returns to the Spotlight

The landmark trials that reshaped Türkiye's political landscape in the late 2000s continue to generate new questions more than a decade later. Among them is the suspicious death of former intelligence officer Kaşif Kozinoğlu, who died in prison in 2011 while being held in connection with the Ergenekon and OdaTV investigations. What began as lingering doubts over the circumstances of his death has now developed into a widening investigation.

While those trials ostensibly targeted military tutelage, suspicions that other agendas were at work had long surrounded the proceedings. Subsequent developments lent considerable weight to those concerns, revealing how the FETÖ network exploited judicial processes to sideline rivals and expand its influence within the state. The reopened investigation into Kozinoğlu's suspicious death has now brought this troubled legacy back into focus. Although no final judicial determination has been reached, investigators are examining allegations that FETÖ may have been involved in his death—a premise that lies at the heart of the renewed inquiry.

As the investigation has widened, it has taken an unusual turn into the world of popular television. Investigators have turned their attention to *Valley of the Wolves (Kurtlar Vadisi)*, the hugely popular series known for its portrayal of intelligence agencies and their fight against enemies threatening national security. A character said to resemble Kozinoğlu was killed in the series at around the time of the former intelligence official's actual death, prompting investigators to question the



(İsa Terli - Anadolu Agency)

programme's screenwriters over whether the episode carried a deliberate message.

The inquiry has since broadened to include allegations that the series at one stage came under the influence of individuals linked to FETÖ and was used to shape public perceptions. At first glance, such claims may seem closer to the realm of popular culture than to a serious criminal investigation. Yet their inclusion in the case opens a more consequential line of inquiry into whether popular media became entangled in the political and institutional struggles of the period. Although these allegations remain under investigation, they potentially extend the significance of the case well beyond the circumstances of a single suspicious death, raising broader questions about how public opinion may have been manipulated and institutions penetrated during a troubled chapter in Türkiye's recent history.

Türkiye's Steady Rise in PISA Results

Türkiye recorded notable gains across all three areas—science, reading and mathematics—in the recently released 2025 PISA results, emerging as the country with the largest overall improvement in scores. For the first time, Turkish students have risen above the OECD average in both science and reading, while coming very close to the average in mathematics.



(Millî Eğitim Bakanlığı - Anadolu Agency)

This success crowns a steady upward trend that has been building since 2015. Despite periodic changes in educational leadership and successive waves of reform, Türkiye's education system has continued to make steady progress. The latest figures suggest that these long-term efforts are now bearing fruit, with improvements becoming increasingly visible, substantial and sustainable.

In the past, modest PISA results were closely followed by the public and media, bringing frequent criticism upon the government and the Ministry of Education. In this context, the positive 2025 results were watched closely and given great importance. Beyond this public interest, the success lies in a shift away from purely memorisation-based learning toward practical application and critical thinking. Because PISA mainly measures a student's ability to interpret and apply knowledge to real-life situations, these results reflect a more functional approach to education in Türkiye. Following years of fluctuating performance, the education system is finally beginning to reap the rewards of these gradual changes.

A Turbulent Day for Borsa İstanbul

Recent developments involving several Turkish investment and portfolio-management companies have led to heightened volatility in the country's capital markets. Following regulatory investigations into suspected market manipulation involving several listed shares, some investors sought to withdraw funds, creating significant liquidity pressures at several investment funds. Some funds subsequently failed to meet redemption payments on time, while concerns spread more broadly across the market and contributed to a sharp decline in Borsa İstanbul on Wednesday. The developments have, however, remained concentrated around a limited number of funds and companies rather than reflecting a disruption across Türkiye's financial system.

Turkish authorities have responded with a series of measures to contain the effects and protect market functioning. The Capital Markets Board (SPK) has temporarily restricted trading in affected funds, initiated the liquidation of certain funds where appropriate, and taken enforcement action, including trading bans and criminal complaints, against individuals suspected of market manipulation. Borsa İstanbul's circuit-breaker mechanisms also activated during the sharp market sell-off, while the Financial Stability Committee has monitored

developments and coordinated the response. The authorities have additionally taken steps to ease liquidity conditions in financial markets. Overall, the response has focused on containing liquidity pressures, maintaining orderly market conditions and protecting investors while the underlying regulatory investigations continue. With these measures in place, authorities have indicated that the situation remains manageable and is not expected to pose a broader threat to Türkiye's financial stability.



(Dilara İrem Sancar - Anadolu Agency)

Highlights

- President Erdoğan commemorated former Prime Minister Adnan Menderes, Foreign Minister Fatin Rüştü Zorlu and Finance Minister Hasan Polatkan on the anniversary of their executions following the 1960 military coup. Paying tribute to their legacy, he recalled three statesmen whose fate became a defining episode in Türkiye's democratic history and whose memory remains closely associated with the country's struggle to consolidate civilian democratic rule.
- Türkiye's Ministry of Foreign Affairs condemned a Houthi drone attack aimed at the city of Mecca in Saudi Arabia, reiterating its steadfast support for the kingdom's security.
- The New Party, formed under Özgür Özel following its split from the CHP, is facing a legal challenge over its name. The Innovation Party (*Yenilik Partisi*) has sought to have the name changed, arguing that its similarity to *Yeni Parti*—with *yenilik* ("innovation") derived from *yeni* ("new")—could cause confusion among voters. The dispute remains unresolved, with no final court ruling issued so far.

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