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## Türkiye to avoid 'fire' of war: Erdoğan

President Erdoğan yesterday highlighted Türkiye's balanced, rational approach to the U.S.-Israel-Iran war and vowed to keep Türkiye away from 'the fire'

ISTANBUL - DAILY SABAH

» PRESIDENT Recep Tayyip Erdoğan yesterday reiterated his criticism of Israel over the U.S.-Israel-Iran war, while he reiterated Türkiye's intention to keep the nation out of the conflict and pursue mediation efforts. Addressing the parliamentary group meeting of the ruling Justice and Development Party (AK Party) in Ankara, Erdoğan said that the war, in its second

month, was escalating in terms of threats. "Our priority is that our country should come out of this stormy period without any incident. We are determined to keep Türkiye out of the fire. We are not falling for the traps of the opposition and manage this process in a cautious, balanced and rational manner," he said.

The opposition adopted a more hawkish tone in the early days of the war and mostly called for siding with Iran while sending

mixed signals about the "regime change" in Iran. The government has avoided a firebrand or one-sided approach so far, despite Türkiye seeing four missiles entering its airspace since the war began on Feb. 28. Ankara has never been harsh in its discourse toward Iran, and the missiles were intercepted by NATO's defense systems. Instead, Türkiye has been keen on playing the role of mediator as it did in the other conflicts in the region and beyond.

Erdoğan reminded that Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan joined a quadrilateral meeting with Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Pakistan to discuss steps to stop the war. He said Defense Minister Yaşar Güler and intelligence chief Ibrahim Kalın were also exerting efforts to that extent.

Stating that Türkiye's stance is clear and that they consider it their duty to do whatever is necessary without hesitation to ensure peace prevails in the region, Erdoğan

said: "If there is even an iota of hope for stopping the bloodshed, ending the tears, silencing the guns and resolving problems through diplomacy, it is our duty of honor to pursue it. Since the beginning of the war, Türkiye's principled stance, attitude and the messages it has given to the world and the region have been the voice of humanity and conscience." He said that they sincerely desire an immediate end to the suffering of brotherly and friendly countries. PAGE 6

### OPINION

NEBİ MİŞ

Why neither US nor Iran can claim victory and what comes next

» THERE is no clear winner in this war, and the timeline for how and when it will end remains uncertain. At present, neither side is in a position to declare victory, and the conflict may never produce an outcome where any party can claim an unqualified triumph.

From the American perspective, striking tens of thousands of targets in Iran, eliminating senior officials and destroying infrastructure may constitute technical achievements. But results that can be presented as successes do not amount to victory when they fall short of the stated strategic objective. Even if framed as a victory, they will not be received as such by the relevant audiences. PAGE 8

### OPINION

CANAN TERCAN

Cuba as the next target: Inside America's regime change model

» IS THE United States preparing a military operation against Cuba? Over the past month, as the Trump administration intensified pressure on Iran, it simultaneously issued threats toward Havana, reviving speculation that Latin America may once again become a theater of direct American intervention. Evaluating the available evidence and the broader strategic context helps clarify what is actually unfolding and what is likely to come next. PAGE 9



A boy raises his fist while standing on a giant Iranian flag during a funeral in Tehran, Iran, April 1, 2026. (AFP Photo)

### IRAN DEFIANT DESPITE TRUMP'S CLAIM OF TEHRAN CEASE-FIRE APPEAL

U.S. PRESIDENT Donald Trump said he was nearly ready to wind down the war and claimed Iran's president wanted a cease-fire, even as Tehran hit an oil tanker off the coast of Qatar and Kuwait's airport yesterday and airstrikes pounded the Iranian capital.

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### Economic effects of Iran war manageable for Türkiye: Şimşek

» SHORT-term economic effects of the Iran war are negative but manageable for Türkiye, with energy supply security not at stake and fiscal space being deployed as a shock absorber, according to Treasury and Finance Minister Mehmet Şimşek.

"Limited warflation, wider current account deficit, slower growth" are among the effects, according to a presentation by Şimşek to investors in London.

Despite the risks, the minister said there has been no change in the government's macroeconomic policy priorities and that disinflation remains the authorities' top goal.

Annual inflation in Türkiye was 31.5% in February after a gradual decline from 75% in 2024. But expectations have risen amid the conflict, largely due to soaring global energy prices.

The U.S.-Israeli war on Iran has effectively shut the Strait of Hormuz, which normally carries around 20% of global crude, products and liquefied natural gas, stoking concerns about global energy supply.

Şimşek's presentation said Türkiye's energy supply security is not at stake.

The government's policy framework remains focused on restoring price stability, maintaining fiscal discipline, achieving a sustainable current account balance and advancing structural reforms, the presentation said. PAGE 5

### West Bank mass strike against Israel death penalty law halts daily life

» A GENERAL strike protesting Israel's new law allowing the death penalty for Palestinian prisoners largely brought daily life to a halt across the occupied West Bank yesterday. Shops, public and private institutions, banks, universities, and schools closed, while hospitals and bakeries remained open, according to Anadolu Agency (AA). Streets in Ramallah, the seat of the Palestinian Authority, appeared largely empty, with businesses shuttered.

The strike followed a call by the Fatah movement, which had announced a comprehensive shutdown a day earlier to op-

pose the law. Fatah said the strike was part of efforts to overturn the Israeli legislation, describing it as a dangerous escalation and a violation targeting Palestinians.

The group also called for broader public mobilization and increased regional and international pressure to repeal the law. Simultaneously, thousands marched in Ramallah yesterday to protest the law, following a rally organized by prisoner advocacy groups, including the Palestinian Prisoner Society, the Commission of Detainees' Affairs and Addameer rights group in central Manara Square. PAGE 10

### CHP dodges key trial for now, seeking early vote

» THE REPUBLICAN People's Party (CHP) is pushing for an early election as the corruption cases pile up. In remarks on Tuesday, the party's leader, Özgür Özel, hinted at a new move for rescheduling the 2028 general elections. Though he did not elaborate, pro-CHP media outlets say the party may have several lawmakers resign to force Parliament to have an early election.

Özel has been vocal about his calls for an early vote as a court in Ankara handles a trial questioning the legitimacy of Özel's leadership at Türkiye's oldest party. Yesterday, a new hearing was held in the trial over the CHP's 38th Congress, which brought Özel to power in November 2023. Özel and his associates are accused of buying votes of delegates to oust then-Chair Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu. The trial was postponed to May 6 amid media reports that the verdict will likely be an "absolute nullification" of the Özel administration.

Suspects testifying at yesterday's hearing rejected allegations that they either were paid by the close circle of Özel to vote for him or were scheming to offer gifts and cash to other delegates to sway their opinion of Özel. PAGE 7

### Dreams come true: National team finally snap 24-year-old World Cup jinx



» TÜRKİYE ended a 24-year absence from the FIFA World Cup with a tense 1-0 victory over Kosovo in the UEFA playoff final, a result that not only secured qualification but also rewrote a narrative of near-misses that had lingered for more than two decades.

On Tuesday at Fadil Vokrri Stadium in Pristina, the decisive moment arrived in the 53rd minute when Kerem Aktürkoğlu capped a swift, clinical counterattack, finishing from close range. PAGE 11

### Ministry of Health screens 3M children for autism across country

» AS PART of the Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Screening and Follow-up Program conducted by the Ministry of Health, 3.1 million children have been screened nationwide. The program, aimed at early diagnosis and continuous monitoring, evaluates children aged 18-36 months through family physicians. Children identified as at risk are referred to specialists, and appointment processes are completed promptly.

Autism spectrum disorder affects brain development and often appears through repetitive behaviors, emerging as a neurodevelopmental difference. Early detection is critical, as timely intervention and follow-up can significantly improve developmental out-

comes for affected children. The ministry's program ensures that children receive consistent evaluations and that families are guided through the health care process efficiently.

The ministry also operates Multidisciplinary Child and Adolescent Mental Health Centers (ÇÖZGEM) in 18 provinces, providing diagnostic assessment, follow-up and early intervention for both children and families. These centers also support children's transition to adulthood and facilitate access to services from other institutions. Services aim to reduce observable symptoms, enhance cognitive and social skills, and connect families to resources in areas such as care, sports and employment. PAGE 3

