

## MAD MAX DIRECTOR TO PRESIDE CANNES FILM FESTIVAL JURY



Renowned Mad Max director George Miller has been named president of the jury of the upcoming 69th Cannes Film Festival. "Throughout his career, George Miller has constantly experimented with a variety of genres, brilliantly reconciling mass audience expectations and the highest artistic standards," the festival administration said in a statement Tuesday. According to the festival, the 70-year-old Australian filmmaker said: "What an unmitigated delight!" >> CULTURE AND ART

## MINORITY FLEEING UKRAINE HOPE TURKEY IS THEIR LAST STOP



Meskhetian Turks -- who have faced repeated deportations and separations -- share their hopes for a better life in Turkey. "There was always a fear of death due to bombardment there, which we cannot forget," says Elmira Elisova, a Meskhetian Turk, who recently settled in the eastern Turkish province of Erzurum. Elisova is just one of thousands of members of an ancient ethnic-Turkish minority who have fled their homes in Ukraine because of the conflict which erupted in April 2014 between government forces and pro-Russian separatists. >> TURKEY - LIFE

## FOOTBALL: ATLETICO'S MARTINEZ IS RECORD-BREAKING MOVE TO CHINA



Guangzhou Evergrande break Asian transfer fee record in \$45.8 million deal. Atletico Madrid's Jackson Martinez is to join Chinese side Guangzhou Evergrande in a 42 million-euro (\$45.8 million) record-breaking deal announced Wednesday. The Colombian striker's fee is a new high for the Asian football transfer market. In a statement, Super League champions Guangzhou said Martinez, 29, had signed a four-year contract. >> SPORTS

WEATHER / ANKARA

Wednesday  
CLOUDY  
11°C

Thursday  
CLOUDY  
9°C



# ANADOLU POST

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## Daesh has nothing to do with Islam, says Erdogan

### Speaking in Chile, Turkish president says terror group is harming Islam

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has told an audience in Chile that the Daesh group, which declared a so-called Islamic caliphate in Iraq and Syria in 2014, has "nothing to do with Islam".

"Islam never allows terrorism; this is one. Secondly, Islam and terror cannot be mentioned together. Third, Daesh is a terror organization and it has nothing to do with Islam," Erdogan said during an address to the UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean in Santiago, Chile.

The Turkish leader is currently on a tour of Latin American states.

Erdogan said that those who linked Islam and terrorism were giving support and courage to terrorist organizations.

"On the contrary, Daesh is harming Islam with what it does," said Erdo-



gan, warning that the approach of associating terror with a religion or an ethnic group empowered xenophobia and racism which he described as a "disgrace [in] the history of humanity".

Refugee crisis

The president turned to the humanitarian crisis in Syria.

"Even though the refugee crisis seems like a regional issue, in fact, it

is a global one. The European countries watching the incidents from outside yesterday are today deeply experiencing the refugee crisis ... inside," Erdogan said.

"Now, they [the European countries] began to shout, saying: 'They do not come to us'. Well, what should Turkey, where 2.5 million people are sheltered, do?" Erdogan asked.

Erdogan said Turkey had spent over \$9 billion for refugees and just received \$420 million from the international community.

"But, Turkey does not care whether we receive aid or not. It has not closed its gates to anyone; whoever comes, Turkey did not look at their race, religion and language, and opened its doors," Erdogan added. Chile's Minister of Foreign Affairs Heraldo Munoz praised Turkey over its efforts in hosting millions of refugees. "I am saying not only in the name of Chile, but also that of Latin America; we are watching the support Turkey gives to refugees with admiration," Munoz said.

Erdogan will head to Peru on Tuesday -- becoming the first Turkish president to visit the country. He will travel to Ecuador on Wednesday. >>MORE DETAILS

## Syria's besieged Madaya struggles with cold, starvation

### Residents of besieged Syrian town begin using furniture for heating fuel

The humanitarian situation in the Syrian town of Madaya -- which has been under siege by the Assad regime and Hezbollah for the last seven months -- continues to deteriorate day by day, with local residents dying of starvation and harsh weather conditions making life even harder for survivors.

Located northwest of capital Damascus, Madaya is currently home to some 40,000 people who remain in desperate need of assistance due to the ongoing siege.

Only two humanitarian aid convoys -- both dispatched by the UN -- have made it into the town, from which residents are prevented from leaving.

The aid shipments, however, have not been enough to prevent as many as 80 people from recently starving to death.

MadayarresidentUmRida, a 46-year-

old mother of six, told Anadolu Agency about her family's struggle against starvation and plummeting winter temperatures.

"We have no money and must cope with both hunger and cold," she said. "One liter of fuel costs nearly 6,000 Syrian lira [roughly \$15] while a kilogram of wood for fuel is 600 Syrian lira [approximately \$1.5]," she lamented.

"I cover my children with blankets to keep them warm. I don't know what else to do. We want the UN to help us. We urge the U.S., Qatar, Europe and Saudi Arabia to help us," she added.

Another Madaya resident, Um Safa, 45, said: "It's getting colder. We need fuel for heating. Please send us fuel. People are dying of cold. We want the roads to be opened and the siege to be lifted."

Ismail Abu Kadr 61, another Madaya



resident, said his family had only received two kilograms of rice from the recent consignments of UN aid.

"There are seven people in this family. What are we supposed to do?" he asked. Located near the Lebanese border the nearby town of Zabadani -- which saw heavy fighting last year -- is also under siege by the regime.

Regime forces have also besieged Zabadani -- the area's last stronghold of the anti-regime opposition -- to stop aid convoys from resupplying it from Lebanon.

A recent influx of people from Zabadani to Madaya has raised the population of the latter from 9,000 to 40,000.

Abdurrahman Abu Firas, 63, recently came to Madaya from Zabadani, which is located some 10 kilometers away.

According to Abu Firas, aid sent recently by the UN had sufficed for only 10 days.

"I can't even find firewood; people have begun burning their cupboards for fuel," he said. "We only want the siege to be lifted."

>>MORE DETAILS

## Operations in Turkey's southeast districts to end soon

### Counter-terror operation in Sur and Cizre districts in southeastern Turkey will be completed in coming days, interior minister says

Turkey's minister of interior affairs, Eftan Ala, said on Tuesday that the counter-terrorism operations in Cizre district will be completed in couple of days, and the Sur district operations may take one or two more weeks.

Following a meeting with eastern and southeastern deputies at the Justice and Development (AK

Party headquarters, Eftan Ala said that new police stations would be built in the southeast. "We will build and we are building the police stations at those places and gendarmerie stations at other places already," said Ala. "This is something we have been doing in a while but we review it in another perspective which considers current con-

ditions." Ala also said a new unit within the security directorate will be formed in the upcoming days.

Sur district in southeastern Diyarbakir province and Cizre district of the southeastern province of Sirnak are among areas that have been the focus of counter-terror operations and military curfews since early Dec. 2015. PKK -- also considered

a terrorist organization by the U.S. and the EU -- resumed its 30-year armed campaign against the Turkish state in late July 2015.

Since then, more than 250 members of the security forces have been martyred and thousands of PKK terrorists killed in operations across Turkey and northern Iraq.

>>MORE DETAILS

## Refugee boat sinks off Turkey's Aegean coast, 9 dead

### Eleven people swim to shore; Turkish Coast Guard rescues two others

At least nine people, including two babies -- one of them only a-month-old -- died Tuesday after a boat carrying refugees capsized in the Aegean Sea off Turkey's western Izmir province.

Eleven others managed to swim to shore and alert the Turkish Coast Guard, which said they rescued two people following the incident near Seferihisar district.

A search-and-rescue operation is underway to find any missing refugees. All those attempting to reach the nearby Greek island of Samos were Syrian nationals.



On Saturday, at least 39 people died in the Aegean Sea while trying to reach the Greek island of Lesbos, while three more drowned Sunday. Turkey's Aegean provinces -- Canakkale, Balikesir, Izmir, Mugla and Aydin -- are prime spots for refugees leaving for the EU,

with many Greek islands lying within sight of the Turkish coast. Over the past year, hundreds of thousands have made short-but-perilous journeys in a bid to reach northern and western Europe in search of a better life. >>MORE DETAILS

## Obama to address Muslim concerns during mosque visit



President Barack Obama will discuss issues affecting the Muslim community during his first visit to a U.S. mosque on Wednesday according to the White House.

During a roundtable discussion with Muslim leaders at the Islamic Society of Baltimore, Obama "is looking for the opportunity to have some dialogue, to talk to leaders in the community about what's on their minds, what their concerns are, and the president's certainly looking forward to that discussion," spokesman Josh Earnest said on Tuesday. He will also address a wider audience at the mosque where he

will "affirm our conviction in the principle of religious liberty -- that law-abiding Americans should be able to worship God in the manner that they see fit, consistent with their religious heritage and traditions in a way that doesn't subject them to either interference from the government or frankly divisive rhetoric on the campaign trail". Some Republican candidates seeking their party's nomination have singled out Muslims during their campaigns, particularly real estate mogul Donald Trump who called for a temporary ban on adherents entering the U.S., citing security concerns.

Obama's remarks will not focus on national security, but will instead highlight "affirming the important role that Muslims play in our diverse American society", Earnest added. >>MORE DETAILS

## UN declares official start of Syria peace talks

The Syria peace talks were officially declared underway Monday as UN special envoy Staffan de Mistura met Syrian opposition delegates in Geneva. "Their arrival to the UN office at Geneva and initiating discussion with us is the official beginning of Syria talks," de Mistura said.

The envoy met opposition figures for two hours after a week-long delay to the conference. The opposition will await a response from the Syrian government on humanitarian steps before starting negotiations with the regime's delegation. De Mistura said the opposition deserved to see a reduction in violence, the release of detainees and aid ar-

iving in besieged towns. He is due to meet the government side Tuesday morning, followed by discussions with the opposition, the High Negotiations Committee (HNC), in the afternoon.

The HNC has been waiting for the regime delegation to address humanitarian issues in Syria, spokesman Salim al-Muslet said Monday after the opposition's meeting with de Mistura.

"I believe we received very positive messages from the special envoy and tomorrow he will have a meeting with the regime side and we will wait for a reply from him," al-Muslet said. >>MORE DETAILS

## Egypt court overturns death sentences for 149 Morsi supporters deal



An Egyptian court on Wednesday overturned death sentences handed down against 149 people accused of killing policemen, a judicial source said. The Court of Cassation accepted an appeal filed by the defendants, who were sentenced to death in February on charges of killing policemen in a mob attack on their station in Kerdasa city near Cairo, the source told Anadolu Agency.

## Merkel urges Putin to step in for cease-fire in Ukraine



Chancellor Angela Merkel has urged Russian President Vladimir Putin in a telephone call on Tuesday to use his influence to make pro-Russian separatists in eastern Ukraine adhere to a cease-fire.

## Gaza tunnels dig deep into Israel's security plans

A sprawling network of underground tunnels running under the border between the Hamas-run Gaza Strip and Israel poses a permanent security threat to the Jewish state, analysts say.