

ANKARA (Reuters) – Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan has said interest rates will continue to fall, after the central bank last month cut rates to 14%, and has added he expects inflation to hit single digits in 2020.

Speaking at a ceremony in Istanbul, Erdogan also said he expected the unemployment rate to fall once data for September is released, after unemployment rose slightly to 14% in the three months to September with the youth jobless rate hitting a record high.

Value of a man depends upon his courage; his veracity depends upon his self-respect and his chastity depends upon his sense of honor.

Amir al-Momeneen Ali (AS)

Zionist Regime Bombs Gaza for Second Day



A ball of fire is seen following an Israeli airstrike in Khan Yunis in the southern Gaza Strip early on November 15, 2019.

WEST BANK (Dispatches) – The Zionist regime has carried out fresh air raids on the Gaza Strip in violation of a ceasefire that ended a flare-up marked by dozens of Palestinians martyred in bombings.

The Al Aqsa TV channel said Zionist warplanes hit an outpost belonging to Hamas in Beit Lahia in northern Gaza Strip, and a naval police compound in Gaza City early on Saturday, leaving no casualties.

Sirens sounded in the middle of the night in Beersheba, the largest city in southern parts of the occupied territories some 35 km from the Gaza fence, warning of incoming fire.

The occupying regime’s emergency service said it was treating five people for anxiety and four others who were injured while running to shelters.

The fresh fighting came two days after the regime accepted Palestinian resistance movement Islamic Jihad’s preconditions for ceasefire.

The worst fighting in months was triggered on Tuesday when the Zionist regime assassinated a top commander from Islamic Jihad.

Gaza medical officials said 34 Palestinians had been killed in the two days of bombings by Israeli warplanes, almost half of them ci-

vilians.

Eight members of the same family, including five children, were killed in an airstrike Wednesday night. The Israeli military said it assessed that the building in the Dayr al-Balah neighborhood in Gaza was empty.

The family’s killing sparked criticisms from Palestinian officials and citizens as well as UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Nickolay Mladenov.

“There is no justification to attacking civilians in Gaza, or elsewhere! Such a tragedy! My heartfelt condolences to the family of al-Sawarkah & I wish a speedy recovery to the in-

jured. I call on Israel to move swiftly with its investigation,” Mladenov tweeted.

A neighbor told Haaretz that the family had lived in the building for “over 20 years,” adding that they were “known as simple people, living in shacks and making their living off herding and some agriculture, nothing beyond that. They ... didn’t come here recently or were moved here by anyone.”

“This was a very simple, poor family, who lived from hand to mouth in a tin shack, with no water or electricity,” another neighbor said. “They lived of herding sheep and were known as simple, poor people. Is this the way the head of a rocket unit or a senior Islamic Jihad officer lives?”

Islamic Jihad retaliated with a salvo of missiles, firing over 450 rockets and mortar shells into Israeli-occupied towns and cities as far as Tel Aviv, which killed at least one and injured dozens and forced the regime to submit to a ceasefire.

On Thursday morning, Islamic Jihad said it had set conditions on accepting the ceasefire, which was mediated by Egypt and the UN, and that the Zionist regime had agreed on the conditions.

According to Khader Habib, a senior leader in Islamic Jihad, Israel had agreed to immediately halt its attacks on Gaza, including airstrikes and targeted killings, and cease to use live ammunition against protesters in the Palestinian enclave.

‘Lebanon’s Situation Turns More Complicated’



A Lebanese anti-government protester waves a national flag in front of burning tires that block the main highway linking the city of Tripoli to Beirut at the coastal city of Byblos, north of the capital on November 13, 2019.

BEIRUT (Dispatches) – Lebanese House Speaker Nabih Berri says that the situation in Lebanon is becoming more complicated and the country is in need of a quick solution to its crisis, local newspaper Al Joumhouria has reported.

“The situation has become more complicated. We need a very quick solution because repercussions of the current crisis are increasing on different levels and they will cause real danger to the country,” Berri said.

Berri said that Lebanon has lost a lot of time and the parliament should have approved the 2020 state budget by now to initiate the needed reforms.

Meanwhile, Lebanon’s bank staff union will meet to decide whether to call off a strike, after receiving a plan to secure banks with a stepped up police presence, the president of the Federation of Syndicates of Bank Employees says.

The union began the strike on Tuesday over safety fears, as protests against political leaders sweep Lebanon and depositors demand access to their money after banks imposed new curbs.

George al-Hajj said banks could re-open as early as Monday if the union agrees that the plan is satisfactory. Hajj expressed support for the plan but said there was not yet a final decision.

It calls for police officers to guard select branches and provides a hotline for banks to call in immediate security assistance if needed.

The developments come as Lebanese parties have agreed to nominate Mohammad Safadi, a wealthy Lebanese businessman and former finance minister, to become prime minister, media reports say. They said the 75-year-old, who

has had extensive business ties to Saudi Arabia, has agreed to accept the post if he wins the support of all the main parties in the country.

“I confirm that we have been in contact with minister Safadi and he has agreed to take on the position of prime minister if his name gets agreement with the main political forces in government,” Lebanon’s Foreign Minister Gebran Bassil said on Friday.

Bassil said the process of formally nominating Safadi for prime minister will occur on Monday when formal discussions on forming the next government begin in parliament.

Outgoing Prime Minister Saad Hariri resigned on October 29 following two weeks of unprecedented nationwide protests against corruption and incompetence.

Since October 17, people have been holding protest rallies in Beirut and other cities to express discontent with the government’s failure to find solutions for their economic woes.

The unprecedented protests, which ultimately forced Hariri to resign on October 29, were triggered by planned taxes on gasoline, tobacco, and online phone calls, such as with WhatsApp.

Under the constitution, Hariri’s cabinet would stay on in a caretaker capacity until a new government is formed.

The consensus on Safadi emerged in a meeting late Thursday between Hariri and representatives of Hezbollah and Amal parties, reports said.

Sources reportedly familiar with details of the meeting said Hariri had expressed no objections to Safadi’s nomination and agreement in principle on Safadi’s nomination had emerged at the meeting.

‘Bomb Attack in Northern Syria Kills 18, Injures 27’

DAMASCUS (Dispatches) – Eighteen civilians are killed and 27 people are injured in a car bomb attack in the Syrian city of al-Bab, 30 kilometers south of the Turkish border, according to Anadolu agency.

The Turkish Defense Ministry earlier wrote on Twitter that 10 people were killed, while 15 people were wounded in the incident. According to the ministry, Kurdish militants are responsible for the attack.

“Inhumane and uncivilized PKK/YPG terrorists continue to

target innocent civilians using the same methods as DAESH. This time the terrorists detonated a car bomb in the Al-Bab bus terminal in the Op Euphrates Shield area, killing 10 civilians and injuring more than 15,” the ministry said.

Earlier, a local source reported that thirteen civilians were killed and more than thirty people were injured in the incident.

Al-Bab is the largest city in the areas of northern Syria controlled by the Turkish Army and its allied forces, referred to as a

safe zone by Ankara.

Last week, at least eight people were killed and more than 20 sustained injuries after a car explosion rocked the village of Suluk in the north of the Syrian Raqqah Governorate.

In October, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan launched a military operation in northeastern Syria to “clear the territory of terrorists,” referring to the so-called Kurdish People’s Protection Units (YPG), which Ankara considers terrorists.

Several weeks later, the op-

eration came to a halt following lengthy negotiations between Russian President Vladimir Putin and his Turkish counterpart Recep Tayyip Erdogan in the Russian city of Sochi.

Under the agreement, Russian military police and Syrian border guards committed themselves to facilitating the withdrawal of Kurdish militia from an 18-mile border zone, outside the area of the Turkish military incursion. Russia and Turkey have since begun joint patrols along the border.

Russian Defense Ministry’s spokesman, Igor Konashenkov, said that Russia did not have reliable information that the U.S. military had actually killed al-Baghdadi.

Baghdadi reportedly blew himself up along with two children when he was cornered by the U.S. military in his hideout in northern Syria, according to U.S. officials.

The terror ringleader’s immediate likely successor, Abu Hassan al-Muhajir, was killed in a U.S. airstrike a day later, according to U.S. officials.

Turkey Detains 25 Relatives of Baghdadi

ANKARA (Sputnik) – Turkish authorities have detained 25 relatives of the slain ringleader of the Daesh terrorist group Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, general prosecutor’s office of Turkey says.

“Al-Baghdadi’s relatives were detained in four provinces as part of an investigation into the Daesh’s activities. A total of 25 people were detained: 11 in the province of Kirsehir, five in Samsun, three in the Ordu and six in Sanliurfa. Four of the detainees were arrested by the court accused of participating in an armed terrorist organization”, the prosecutor’s office said in a

statement.

The report comes nearly two weeks after Turkish-backed militia in Syria announced they had caught Al-Baghdadi’s sister, Rasmiya Awad, and handed her over to Turkey. 21 members of the family, including children, were sent to repatriation centers where Turkish authorities prepare refugees to be returned to their country of origin.

U.S. President Donald Trump said on 27 October that al-Baghdadi had been killed in a U.S. operation in Syria’s Idlib. Later that day, the

Protesters Continue to Foment Unrest in Baghdad

BAGHDAD (Dispatches) – Iraqi protesters continued to stoke unrest by occupying part of a main bridge in Baghdad, a report says.

Demonstrators also occupied a tall building overlooking the bridge in the center of the Iraqi capital after protests had appeared to lose momentum.

A bomb blast at a nearby square during the night killed at least three people, police and medics said, but it was not immediately clear who was responsible or whether it was

linked to demonstrations.

Protests began in October over lack of jobs and public services.

Prime Minister Adel Abdul Mahdi’s government has warned against any violent protest. Powerful religious authorities have advised the government to enact real reform to improve the lives of Iraqis.

Despite a rare period of calm since Daesh was defeat, many people in the region’s second-largest oil producing country suffer poverty, unemployment and poor healthcare.