

Headlines:

- **America Sells Out the Kurds, Again**
- **US Government Shutdown, Again**
- **Nawaz Sharif sent Back to Prison, Again**

Details:

America Sells Out the Kurds, Again

Since the announcement of the US troops withdrawal from Syria the details of how the decision was made are being revealed. In a phone call President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and President Trump agreed to coordinate in the announced US withdrawal from Syria. Officials say the goal is to prevent “an authority vacuum” in eastern Syria. This came following Erdogan’s last call to Trump on the planned Turkish invasion of the region. In effect, the US presence is going to be replaced with a Turkish one. Once again the US sold out the Kurds, but this would mean Turkey will play a central role in the future of Turkey as it will control the key energy region of Syria as well as its most fertile land.

US Government Shutdown, Again

The U.S. government partially shut down on Saturday, and there is no sign of tangible efforts to reopen agencies closed by a political impasse over Trump’s demand for border wall funds. Trump declared that he would not sign any funding bill that did not include his border wall funding. *“I can’t tell you when the government is going to reopen,”* Trump said, speaking after a Christmas Day video conference with US troops serving abroad. *“I can tell you it’s not going to reopen until we have a wall, a fence, whatever they’d like to call it. I’ll call it whatever they want, but it’s all the same thing. It’s a barrier from people pouring into the country, from drugs.”* The House of Representatives passed a version of the Further Additional Continuing Appropriations Act, that added \$5 billion for the wall and \$8 billion in disaster aid. But Trump’s changing position caused the shutdown, which began on December 22. The initial effects are expected to be lessened because the beginning of the shutdown coincides with a four-day weekend due to Christmas. If the shutdown were to extend into a normal workday, about 400,000 federal employees are expected to be on a leave of absence out of the 800,000 working for the affected agencies, out of 2.1 million civilian non-postal federal employees.

Nawaz Sharif sent Back to Prison, Again

Former Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif has been sent back to jail after a fresh corruption conviction. The anti-corruption court in Islamabad gave Sharif a seven-year term for investments beyond his declared assets. Sharif, who denies wrongdoing, was jailed in July in a different corruption case but bailed on appeal when the Islamabad High Court suspended his 10-year sentence in September. Security around the court in Islamabad was tight for the verdict.

The former ruling party - the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz - had threatened to start a mass protest movement and disrupt parliamentary business if its leader were sent back to prison.

Security personnel fired tear gas and baton charged his supporters outside the court. Sharif has been in and out of prison so many times that Pakistan’s system is not just broken, but it is beyond repair.