

Turkey continues crackdown on protesters - Tehran Times

Staff & Agencies

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Police have arrested 25 demonstrators during protests in Istanbul's Kadikoy district, an opposition stronghold, as protesters took to the streets for a fifth night running.

On Friday night police fired tear gas to disperse protesters in the Turkish capital Ankara, Istanbul and Hatay, Al Jazeera reported.

Thousands gathered in Ankara to protest against the construction of a cultural centre that will have be both a Sunni mosque and an Alevi prayer house. The minority Alevi are Shia Muslims.

Anti-government sentiment was inflamed by the death of a 22-year-old protester , Ahmet Atakan, in Hatay on Monday.

Atakan's death was the sixth recorded in protests since demonstrations against the government of Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan began in June. Atakan family said he had been killed by police, a claim denied by Interior Minister Muammer Guler, who accused protesters of using the young man's death to "spread chaos".

Local officials said Atakan died after falling from a rooftop where he had been throwing stones at police.

Meanwhile Amnesty International called on "all countries" Thursday to cease teargas shipments to Turkey following the violent state response to anti-government protests last week, Ahram online reported.

"All countries should suspend shipments of teargas, armored vehicles and other riot control projectile equipment to Turkey until the Turkish authorities can guarantee protesters' right to peaceful assembly and freedom of expression," Amnesty stated.

Amnesty referred to media reports which reveal that Turkey's police has requested some 100,000 teargas canisters and more than 100 armored vehicles from Brazil, India, South Korea and the United States, Ankara's major suppliers of "riot control equipment."