

# Greek PM calls for 'sense' from Turkey

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● Greece also deployed warships to monitor the vessel

AFP News

Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis yesterday urged Turkey to show "sense" in a naval showdown in the Eastern Mediterranean over energy exploration which he warned could lead to a military accident.

Tensions were stoked Monday when Ankara dispatched the research ship Oruc Reis accompanied by Turkish naval vessels off the Greek island of Kastellorizo in the eastern Mediterranean.

Greece also deployed warships to monitor the vessel, which is currently sailing west of Cyprus.

"We are vigilantly looking forward to sense prevailing, at last, in our neighbouring country, so that dialogue may be re-initiated in good faith," Mitsotakis said in a statement released by his office first in Greek, then in English with some variations.

"The risk of an accident lurks



Turkey's energy exploration vessel is being escorted by warships

when so many military assets are gathered in such a contained area," he warned.

The Greek PM said Athens would not seek to escalate the situation, but added: "No provocation will though go unanswered."

Athens has demanded the immediate withdrawal of the Oruc Reis from what it regards as its

continental shelf, and has asked for an emergency meeting of EU foreign ministers on the issue.

Greece 'will not suffer blackmail'

"Our country never threatens but will not suffer blackmail either," Mitsotakis said.

"We are not alone in this effort," he said.

Earlier Wednesday, EU diplo-

macy chief Josep Borrell said foreign ministers will hold an extraordinary meeting Friday to discuss the eastern Mediterranean, Lebanon and Belarus.

The incident is the latest spat over energy exploration in the gas-rich eastern Mediterranean, a frequent source of disputes between Turkey and neighbours including Greece, Cyprus and

Israel. Greek Foreign Minister Nikos Dendias will fly to Israel on Thursday for talks, his office said.

Dendias is also to address the issue with US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo in Vienna on Friday.

Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu has said his country would step up energy



Greece, Cyprus and Israel in January signed an agreement for a huge pipeline project to transport gas from the eastern Mediterranean to Europe despite Turkey's hostility to the deal.

exploration in the eastern Mediterranean and would not "compromise" on its rights.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan sounded a slightly more conciliatory note after a meeting with his own ministers later Monday.

"Let us all come together as Mediterranean countries and find a formula that protects all of our rights," Erdogan said in a national address.

But Erdogan added: "We cannot allow (nations) to ignore a big country like Turkey and try to imprison us to our shores."

The Turkish foreign ministry has said the Greece-Egypt agreement was "null and void".

## Last year was one of three warmest on record

Reuters | London

Last year was one of the three warmest on record, with glaciers melting, sea levels rising and a spate of wildfires, heatwaves and droughts, research published in the Bulletin of the American Meteorological Society (BAMS) showed.

The BAMS annual State of the Climate Report, by 528 climate scientists from 61 countries, said only 2015 and 2016 were hotter than 2019, based on records dating to the mid- to late 1800s.

Each decade since 1980 has been successively warmer than the preceding one, with the most recent (2010-2019) being around 0.2 degrees Celsius warmer globally than the previous (2000-09).

For the 32nd consecutive year, 2019 saw the loss of mass from mountain glaciers, while lake temperatures were above the long-term average and permafrost temperatures continued to rise.

In 2019, global mean sea level set a new record for the eighth year running, reaching 87.6 mm above the 1993 average when satellite measurements began, with an annual average increase of 6.1 mm from 2018, the report said.

Greenhouse gas emissions, which contribute to climate change and pollution, increased. Carbon dioxide emissions rose by 2.5 parts per million (ppm), nitrous oxide by 1 part per billion (ppb) and methane by 9.2 parts per billion, the report said.

"A number of extreme events, such as wildfires, heatwaves and droughts, have at least part of their root linked to the rise in global temperature," said Robert Dunn from the UK's Met Office, which contributed to the report.

"The rise in global temperature is linked to another climate indicator: the ongoing rise in emissions of greenhouse gases, notably carbon dioxide, nitrous oxide and methane."



A child cools off under a water spray as a heatwave rolls over Paris

## Knife man briefly holds guard hostage in cathedral

AFP

A man armed with a knife momentarily took a guard hostage inside Milan's cathedral yesterday but was quickly arrested, police said.

He entered the famous Gothic Duomo shortly after 1pm local time (1100 GMT) and "advanced towards the private security guard, took out a knife and threatened him," police spokesman Marco Turchetto told AFP.

After the arrival of nearby officers on patrol and a brief mediation, the man dropped the knife and was arrested, he said.

Milan's Deputy Mayor Anna Scavuzzo said in a statement the man had entered the cathedral in order to evade a police check.

Police said they were trying to determine the man's identity.



A man armed with a knife briefly took a guard hostage inside Milan cathedral

## Vaping linked to risk of COVID-19 in teens

Reuters

Vaping may be associated with a five to seven times increased risk of COVID-19 among US teenagers and young adults, a study published on Tuesday suggests.

Researchers at the Stanford University School of Medicine analyzed nationally representative survey data collected in May from 4,351 participants aged 13-24 years. The findings were published in the Journal of Adolescent Health.

"Young people may believe their age protects them from contracting the virus or that they will not experience symptoms of COVID-19, but the data show this isn't true among those who vape," study leader Shivani Mathur Gaiha said in a press



A woman exhales after vaping in Times Square

statement.

Participants were asked if they had ever used vaping devices or combustible cigarettes, whether they had vaped or smoked in the past 30 days, and if they had experienced COVID-19 symptoms, been tested for COVID-19 or been diagnosed with the infectious disease.

Participants who had used both cigarettes and e-cigarettes in the previous 30 days were 4.7 times more likely to experience COVID-19 symptoms compared with those who never smoked or vaped.

Among people tested for COVID-19, those who used just e-cigarettes were five times more

likely to get a positive COVID-19 test result. Those who had ever used both e-cigarettes and cigarettes were seven times more likely to be diagnosed with COVID-19, the study found.

The study cannot prove that vaping causes COVID-19. The researchers note, however, that vaping involves the repeated touching of hands to the mouth and face, which is associated with the spread of COVID-19. Further, exposure to nicotine and other chemicals in e-cigarettes and combustible cigarettes causes lung damage.

The researchers hope their findings will prompt the U.S. Food and Drug Administration to effectively regulate e-cigarettes during the COVID-19 pandemic.