

Key players in Turkish election

Turkey's ruling centre-right AK Party is likely to win a majority of seats in parliamentary elections that will highlight the deepening divide between the Islamic-oriented government and opponents who fear religion is encroaching on secular traditions



RECEP TAYYIP ERDOGAN: AK Party leader. Has presided over strong economic growth and launch of EU membership talks since becoming premier in 2003.

Says he has no intention of imposing religion on politics, but is distrusted by secular elite because of Islamist past

DENIZ BAYKAL: Veteran leader of main opposition **Republican People's Party**, centre-left, nationalist, and staunchly secular. Opposes easing of restrictions



against religious symbols, pledges to be more assertive in EU talks and in tackling Kurdish separatist rebels

ABDULLAH GUL: Foreign minister whose presidential bid was blocked by opposition parties because his election to a position with veto power would remove last obstacle to Islamic takeover of government



DEVLET BAHCELI: Head of far-right **Nationalist Movement Party**. Has called for army incursion into Iraq to crush Kurdish militants and for restoration of death penalty

MEHMET AGAR: Leader of centre-right but secularist **Democratic Party**, heir to **True Path Party** of 1980s-90s. Most suitable coalition partner for AK Party if it can secure minimum 10% of vote

CEM UZAN: Leader of right-wing **Genc or Young Party**, woos younger voters with populist, often strongly nationalist slogans. May struggle to clear 10% threshold to enter parliament

INDEPENDENTS: Up to 50 independent lawmakers, mostly from pro-Kurdish **Democratic Society Party**, running as independents to beat 10% threshold