

PM hints at ‘nearby’ figures for bugging



The bug in PM’s office was reportedly in a power socket. DHA photo
Prime Minister [Recep Tayyip Erdoğan](#) has hinted that “those physically close to him” might have been responsible for alleged wiretapping but stopped short of detailing whether or not his bodyguards are suspected of the eavesdropping.

“No outsiders are specifically coming to do this [place bugs]. You know perfectly from history that they do it by [using] those nearest to you. An investigation is still being conducted; the perpetrators will be identified if possible,” Erdoğan said in a televised interview late Dec. 28.

Although Erdoğan did not identify who was closest to him, suspicions have centered on his bodyguard team following a large number of replacements to the 500-member team earlier in the year.

An investigation into the matter is being conducted by the Prime Ministry Inspection Board, Erdoğan said, adding that media scrutiny of the issue was not helpful.

“The [investigation] process is ongoing. Exaggerating this issue is not right. This has become a judicial issue. But the main opposition party is [bringing it up] insistently. I do not understand why they are doing this,” he said.

Expressing his pessimism over how to halt wiretapping due to technological advancement, Erdoğan said the greatest success would be in reducing the number of wiretapping cases.

“We are fully against of illegal wiretapping and we are taking precautions to this end. We established the Telecommunications Directorate [TIB] for this purpose,” Erdoğan said, adding that merging the capabilities of civilian and military surveillance under a single organization was another step toward strengthening measures to halt electronic eavesdropping.

Turkey’s National Intelligence Organization (MIT) has been conducting an investigation into the claims for months, but Erdoğan only shared the allegations with the public Dec. 21.