

## **Anti-terror task in Syria remains current priority: Vladimir Putin**

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**Moscow:** Russian President Vladimir Putin said on Wednesday that victory in the fight against terrorism in Syria should come before any concrete dialogue on political reconciliation in the war-torn country.

"Certainly, the struggle against the common evil namely terrorism is prioritised today," an Xinhua quoted Putin as saying.

Only after defeating terrorism, or at least striking a significant blow at terrorist and extremist groups, could we talk about the details of Syria's political settlement, Putin stressed.

Putin made the remarks when meeting with the visiting German Vice Chancellor and Minister for Economic Affairs and Energy Sigmar Gabriel.

During the meeting, Putin reiterated Russia's support for political settlement of Syrian crisis, saying the country's statehood should be strengthened and state structures be restored.

It is necessary to promote the political process and final settlement of all disputable international issues, Putin said.

Earlier in the day, during a security session with the special services from the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), Putin reaffirmed Russia's readiness to cooperate with CIS countries to ensure regional stability.

While warning of possible merging of radical groups with transnational organised crimes, Putin said terrorists are attempting to use the Middle East and North Africa as a springboard to destabilise other states by militant recruitment and training.

He urged all interested parties to join efforts and search for new efficient ways of responding to modern threats and challenges through coordination.

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