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Saturday, June 9, 2018

WEATHER / ANKARA
Saturday, Partly Cloudy 27°C

Austria's 'racist' move outrages Muslims

Turkish justice minister says around 70 percent of cases related to 2016 coup attempt have been decided

By Askin Kiyagan and Meryem Goktas

VIENNA, ANKARA - Austria will shut seven mosques and expel 40 imams, Chancellor Sebastian Kurz announced on Friday. During a news conference with Vice Chancellor Heinz-Christian Strache and EU Affairs Minister Gernot Blumel, Kurz said the move came as part of a crackdown on "political Islam". Kurz said that the investigation on several mosques and associations conducted by the Ministry of Interior and Office of Religious

Affairs had been concluded and that the activities of seven mosques were found to be forbidden -- one of them belonging to the Turkish-Islamic Cultural Associations (ATIB). The Austrian chancellor added that the imams would be deported on grounds of being foreign funded. In 2015 when Kurz was Austria's minister for Europe, integration and foreign affairs he backed Austria's "law on Islam" (Islamgesetz) -- legislation that, among other things, banned the foreign funding of mosques and imams in Austria. The controversial law, which

eventually passed through parliament, was intended to develop an Islam of "European character," according to Kurz. "We act decisively and actively against undesirable developments and the formation of #parallelsocieties - and will continue to do so if there are violations of the #law on Islam," Kurz wrote on his Twitter account. Turkey's presidential aide Ibrahim Kalin on his Twitter account said that Austria's move to close seven mosques and expel imams "is a reflection of the Islamophobic, racist and discriminatory wave in this country". **MORE DETAILS**



Austrian Prime Minister Sebastian Kurz



Anadolu Agency Photo

Syrians return home to spend Ramadan holiday

KILIS - Thousands of Syrian refugees are returning to their home country for the Ramadan holiday after the Turkish army liberated terrorist hotbeds near the border. Nearly 39,000 Syrians have returned to areas, including Azaz, Afrin, Jarabulus, and al-Bab, secured by Turkey's military operations Euphrates Shield and Olive Branch, according to an

official at the migration office in Turkey. A total of 76,000 Syrians applied online to Turkish authorities to spend the eid holiday in Syria, according to the official who spoke on condition of anonymity due to restrictions on talking to the media. Muslims across the world celebrate the Eid al Fitr, a three-day festival that follows the fasting... **MORE DETAILS**

Over 60 PKK terrorists neutralized in N. Iraq

By Baris Gundogan



ANKARA - A total of 64 PKK terrorists were "neutralized" in northern Iraq from June 1-7 during security operations, the Turkish military said Friday. In a statement, the General Staff said that 4,503 terrorists have been "neutralized" since the beginning of Operation Olive Branch in Syria this January. Turkish authorities often use the word "neutralized" in their statements to imply that the terrorists in question either surrendered or were killed or captured. **MORE DETAILS**

Russian airstrikes kill 35 civilians in Idlib



Anadolu Agency Photo

By Burak Karacaoglu and Esref Musa

IDLIB - The number of civilians killed by Russian airstrikes in Syria's northwestern city of Idlib has risen to 35 with another 75 injured, according to local civil-defense sources. Mustafa Haj Yousuf, head of the White Helmets civil-defense agency in Idlib, told Anadolu Agency that the strikes

had targeted the village of Zardana. According to Haj Yousuf, five members of the White Helmets were among those injured by the strikes, which, he alleged, had targeted residential areas. "The airstrikes were carried out by SU-24 Russian fighter jets dispatched from the Latakia airbase," Syrian opposition groups said in a statement. Injured civilians were reportedly taken

to nearby hospitals while local civil-defense units carried out search-and-rescue operations. Idlib, which remains under opposition control, was designated a "de-escalation zone" -- in which acts of aggression are expressly forbidden -- in May of last year. Nevertheless, the Assad regime and Russian forces have continued... **MORE DETAILS**



Anadolu Agency Photo

Daesh terrorists rounded up in Iraq's Mosul

NINEVEH - Seven Daesh terrorists have been arrested within the last 24 hours in the city of Mosul, regional capital of Iraq's northern Nineveh province, a local police source said Friday. Nineveh Police Chief Hamad

al-Jabouri told Anadolu Agency that arrests had been based on an intelligence tipoff. The Daesh members, he said, had been found and arrested in Mosul's Tal al-Roman, Al-Mamoun and... **MORE DETAILS**