

Religious extremists in Turkey look forward to high court ruling in bid to reconvert Hagia Sophia into mosque



Press reports in Turkey continue on almost a daily basis over the Erdogan government's threats to reconvert the Hagia Sophia back into a mosque, from its current status as Turkey's most visited museum.

The now intense speculation comes before an expected ruling by Turkey's high court on July 2 on whether the greatest of all cathedrals in eastern Christendom can be converted into a mosque.

The Patriarchal cathedral in Constantinople for nearly a millennium was violently converted into a so-called "conquest mosque" — when the Bosphorus metropolis was overrun by the Ottoman Turks after a two-month siege in May 1453.

It was transformed into a museum in the mid 1930s by a strictly secular government in Turkey, although demands to reconvert the UNESCO World Heritage

Monument back into a mosque have intensified over the past decade, mainly by Islamist groups and politicians.

Several political analysts, in fact, point to an attempt by the Erdogan government to divert public opinion from the slumped Turkish economy and the major exposure Covid-19 exposure in the country .

According a report this week in the Turkish daily “Hurriyet”, officials in Turkey’s Directorate of Religious Affairs are considering plans to drape the floors of the incomparable cathedral with giant oriental rugs, as well as remotely controlled blinds to cover Christian mosaics.