

Turkish media reacts to governor's suggestion to suspend financing to restore mosque on Lesbos



The North Aegean Regional Governor, Costas Moutzouris, made a request to the Minister of Development, Adonis Georgiadis, and the Minister of Finance, Christos Staikouras, to suspend the financing to restore the Valide mosque in Mytilene, as reported by Greek City Times.

“The North Aegean Regional Governor and the Regional Authority consider that in the current circumstances the financing and execution of the project that was approved and included in the Special Purpose Development Program for the North Aegean 2017-2020 should be stopped,” Moutzouris wrote.

In 2018, €1.2 million was assigned to restore the building.

The Governor himself stated that he proceeded with this decision since he cannot be indifferent to “what is happening in Constantinople and especially the transformation of Hagia Sophia into a mosque by the Erdoğan government.”

In response to this news, there was a media storm by many Turkish media outlets.

Haberler had the title “Retaliation of Hagia Sophia from the Greek governor: Stop

the restoration of the Valide Mosque in Lesvos.”

Tele1 had the title “Retaliation for ‘Hagia Sophia’ from Greece! ‘Valide Mosque’ called...”

Gazete Demokrat ran the headline “Retaliation of Hagia Sophia from the Greek governor: Stop the restoration of the Valide Mosque in Lesvos.”

Gazete Duvar had the headline “Greek governor: stop restoration of Valide Mosque in Lesvos.”

These are just some of the many headlines published by Turkish media about the Valide Mosque in Lesvos potentially having its finances for a restoration cut.

Built in 1615, this mosque was declared as a monument by the Greek Ministry of Culture in 1981, but no work has been done to restore it since then.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan signed the decree last Friday, allowing the operation of Hagia Sophia as a “functioning mosque”, according to which the country’s General Directorate of Religious Affairs would take control of the building.

Erdoğan also announced that Hagia Sophia mosque will be open for prayer on July 24.

According to Hürriyet, Hagia Sophia will be open for prayer but also for tourists who want to visit it. They said that icons and mosaics will be covered with special technology and lighting.

This has seen widespread international condemnation and will see Greece make many retaliations against Turkey’s disrespect for cultural and religious heritage.

greekcitytimes.com