
TURKEY'S ARMENIAN PATRIARCH MUTAFYAN DIES AT 62

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The Armenian Patriarch in Turkey Mesrob Mutafyan passed away in Istanbul on March 8, according to hospital sources.

The top religious leader of the Christian Armenians in Turkey, Archbishop Mesrob II Mutafyan died at age 63 in an Armenian hospital where he was receiving treatment in Zeytinburnu, Istanbul.

He had been incapacitated since 2008 with an early onset of dementia.

Mesrob was elected Patriarch in 1998, replacing the late Karekin II.

In 2008, Archbishop Aram Ateşyan was appointed to fulfill Mesrob's duties as the acting patriarch.

Bedros Şirinoğlu, the head of the Armenian Foundations Union and the Board of Surp Pirgic Armenian Hospital, expressed his condolences to the Armenian community in a statement.

Our Patriarch Mesrob Mutafyan, whom we have been trying to treat for 10 years in our hospital, unfortunately passed away at quarter to 1 p.m. today due to a heart attack. He was a precious religious man. He loved his country and nation. But shortly after he became Patriarch, he unfortunately started to suffer from this illness [Alzheimers]. Our hospital did everything possible. Unfortunately we can not save him. He was a religious man loved in the world, he said.

Şirinoglu said the funeral details will be announced later.

Meanwhile, President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan has called Aram Ateşyan, the acting patriarch of the Armenian Patriarchate of Turkey, to express his condolences, according to a statement released by the Presidency.

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