

Turkish officials say coup plotters arrested

Prime Minister calls emergency parliament meeting

Associated Press

ANKARA, Turkey — Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan told the nation Saturday that his government was working to crush a coup attempt after a night of explosions, air battles and gunfire across the capital that left dozens dead and at least 150 people wounded.

Government officials said the coup appeared to have failed as Turks took to the streets overnight to confront troops attempting to take over the country. However, the sounds of huge blasts, including at least one bomb that hit the parliament complex, continued to ring out in the capital, Ankara, and Istanbul throughout the morning.

Speaking on national television from Istanbul, Erdogan said the government was arresting coup supporters in the military and warned “they will pay a heavy price for their treason to Turkey,” according to a transcript of his remarks provided by his office. “Those who stain the military’s reputation must leave. The process has started today and it will continue just as we fight other terrorist groups.”

Prime Minister Binali Yildirim, speaking to state-run Anadolu Agency, said more than 120 arrests were made.

Erdogan, who said his general secretary had been abducted by the coup plotters, flew into Istanbul’s Ataturk airport early Saturday and was greeted by large crowds. Hours earlier, as the coup attempt got underway, his office declined to say where he was, and he was forced to give an interview over FaceTime to a television station.

The chaos capped a period of political turmoil in Turkey which critics blamed on Erdogan’s increasingly authoritarian rule, which has included a government shake-up, a crackdown on dissidents and opposition media and renewed conflict in the mainly Kurdish areas of the southeast.

Turkey, a NATO member, is a key partner in U.S.-led efforts to defeat the Islamic State group, and has allowed American jets to use its Incirlik air base to fly missions against the extremists in nearby Syria and Iraq. A coup against the democratically elected government could make it difficult for the United States to continue to cooperate with Turkey.

U.S. President Barack Obama urged all sides in Turkey to support



Turkish soldiers secure the area as supporters of Turkey’s President Recep Tayyip Erdogan protest in Istanbul’s Taksim square, early Saturday.

the democratically elected government. NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg said he spoke to Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu and called for respect for democracy.

The coup attempt began late Friday, with a statement from the military saying it had seized control “to reinstall the constitutional order, democracy, human rights and freedoms, to ensure that the rule of law once again reigns in the country, for law and order to be reinstated.”

Fighter jets buzzed overhead, gunfire erupted outside military headquarters and vehicles blocked two major bridges in Istanbul. Soldiers backed by tanks blocked entry to Istanbul’s airport for a couple of hours, before being overtaken by pro-government crowds carrying Turkish flags, according to footage broadcast by the Dogan news agency.

But the military did not appear unified, with top commanders taking to television to condemn the action and order troops back to their barracks.

“Those who are attempting a coup will not succeed. Our people should know that we will overcome this,” Gen. Zekai Aksakalli, the commander of the military special forces, told the private NTV television by telephone.

Fighter jets under the control of loyalist forces were flying over the capital to strike at helicopters flown by coup supporters, the Anadolu news agency said. NTV reported that one helicopter was shot down.



Tanks move into position as Turkish people attempt to stop them, in Ankara, Turkey, early Saturday.

Gunfire and explosions rang out.

Erdogan called on Turks to take to the streets across the country, and many did, marching through the streets of Izmir and Istanbul, waving Turkish flags and gathering in the main square in Ankara. The Dogan news agency reported that soldiers fired on a group of people trying to cross the Bosphorus bridge to protest the attempted coup, and that some people have been hurt. TV footage showed people running for cover amid gunfire.

Troops also fired in the air to disperse a growing crowd of government supporters at the Taksim monument in Istanbul as military helicopters flew overhead. A nearby mosque made an anti-coup announcement over its

loudspeakers. Several blasts and the screech of fighter jets were heard in central Istanbul as dawn approached.

At least 42 people were killed in the capital, NTV quoted the prosecutor’s office as saying. Parliament Speaker Ismail Kahraman said a bomb hit one corner of a building inside the parliament complex, injuring some police officers.

In Istanbul, an official at Haydarpasa Numune Hospital said at least 150 people were admitted with wounds but would not comment on whether there were fatalities. NTV reported six dead had been brought to that hospital. An official at Istanbul’s Sisli Hamidiye Etfal Training and Research Hospital said they had also received dead

Government says exiled cleric to blame

(AP) — A lawyer for the Turkish government, Robert Amsterdam, said that “there are indications of direct involvement” in the coup attempt by Fethullah Gulen, a Muslim cleric who is living in exile in Pennsylvania. He said he and his firm “have attempted repeatedly to warn the U.S. government of the threat posed” by Gulen and his movement. According to Turkish intelligence sources, he said, “there are signs that Gulen is working closely with certain members of military leadership against the elected civilian government.”

The president of a group that promotes Gulen’s ideas, the New York-based Alliance for Shared Values, denied the charges. Y. Alp Aslandogan told The Associated Press “we categorically deny such accusations and find them to be highly irresponsible.” Earlier in the evening, the alliance said, “we condemn any military intervention in (the) domestic politics of Turkey.”

and wounded. Both officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not allowed to comment publicly.

Parliament Speaker Ismail Kahraman said a bomb hit one corner of a public relations building inside the parliament complex, injuring some police officers.

In his TV address, Erdogan blamed the attack on supporters of Fethullah Gulen. Erdogan has long accused the cleric and his supporters of attempting to overthrow the government. The cleric lives in exile in Pennsylvania and promotes a philosophy that blends a mystical form of Islam with staunch advocacy of democracy, education, science and interfaith dialogue.

By Saturday morning, a top Turkish official said the coup attempt appeared to have been repelled. The senior official told The Associated Press that all government officials were in charge of their offices. The official requested anonymity because of the sensitivity of the issue.

As the crisis unfolded, there were reports that access to popular social media sites like Twitter and Facebook had been blocked within the country. Facebook declined comment, Twitter said it suspected “intentional” interference with its service.

An out-of-place truck, then screams as Nice attack unfolded

Associated Press

NICE, France — Almost instantly, those in its murderous path could tell that the speeding white truck was all wrong so late at night on Nice’s beachfront boulevard whose bright lights glittered along the bay like a string of stars.

The Promenade des Anglais was meant to be closed to traffic, cordoned off with metal barriers and plastic tape, so families and tourists could stroll worry-free beside the azure waters of the Mediterranean and marvel at the Bastille Day fireworks.

The truck sped straight for them, slowing at times, accelerating at others, leaving death, screams and horrific injuries in its wake.

“I realized right away it was a terrorist attack when I saw the truck crushing people,” said Antonio Arribas, who was with his cousin, Diego.

The rented 21 U.S.-ton truck zigzagged for 1.3 miles through holiday crowds like a snow plow, leaving a gruesome trail of crushed and mangled bodies. The 84 dead included French and foreigners, children and adults.

Just when Egyptian tourist Nader El Shafei looked like he might fall next under its large wheels, the truck stopped. The attacker, a 31-year-old Tunisian who lived in Nice and drove for living, was killed by police gunfire.

Moments earlier, as the fireworks show was ending, El Shafei said he’d looked at the large crowds and thought to himself: “If someone crazy want(s) to do something, this is the right place and the right time, among all those innocent people.”

He had traveled to Nice



31-year old Nice resident, Mohamed Bouhlel, began driving a large truck on the promenade at 10:45 p.m. local time.

Bouhlel plowed through crowds the entire way, killing at least 84 people and injuring at least 202.

Bouhlel shot at three officers at the Negresco hotel. They fired back and followed the truck and the truck halted at the Palais de la Mediterranee, where he was killed.

AP

expecting to see “paradise.”

“But I saw something else,” he said.

He caught the scene on video — the crackle of gunshots, officers warily approaching the cab with its windshield pockmarked with holes. El Shafei said he saw the driver, later identified by authorities as Mohamed Bouhlel, fire back through a window.

France’s third attack with mass casualties in 18 months was even more indiscriminate than the others. The dead in Nice included at least 10 children and adolescents. They had come to marvel at the fireworks, “to feel joy, to share in happiness and be dazzled,” said President Francois Hollande.

“And they were struck, struck to death, to satisfy the cruelty of an individual and perhaps of a group,” he said after visiting a hospital that treated victims.

French officials called it an undeniable act of terror, but no group claimed respon-

sibility and it was unclear if the driver had any ties to extremists.

Paris prosecutor Francois Molins said the refrigerated truck was rented in the outskirts of Nice on July 11. It was due back July 13 but instead was parked east of the city.

Bouhlel rode a bike to the truck, Molins said.

About 25 minutes before the fireworks show, he clambered aboard and drove toward the city — and the crowded promenade near Nice’s glittering hotels.

The truck’s murderous journey lasted 15 city blocks.

Video showed the truck moving slowly at one point — so slowly that a man in a white shirt was able, at a run, to catch up with it. There were two sharp sounds as he caught up with it. It was unclear whether the sounds were him banging on its closed back doors to get it to stop, or gunfire.

A speeding motorcycle rider also pulled even with the driver’s cab, swerving with a screech of tires around a pedestrian. The motorcyclist

ditched his bike and also ran alongside and even managed to grab the truck to try to get it to stop.

Then the truck dramatically picked up speed as people fled in terror.

“I thought it could either be a drunk driver or a terror attack,” said German tourist Richard Gutjahr, who filmed it from a hotel balcony.

People were hit head on. “A lot of them had been dragged under the lorry and were not recognizable,” English tourist Simon Coates, who was cycling back to his hotel when the truck approached, told the BBC. “I saw some dreadful things. It was like a chamber of horrors. Every person seemed to have died in an increasingly grotesque way.”

Molins said Bouhlel shot at three police officers outside the palatial Negresco Hotel. They fired back and pursued the truck as it continued on for

another 300 yards to the Palais de la Mediterranee Hotel. More shots were fired there.

Bouhlel was found dead in the passenger seat.

El Shafei, the 42-year-old Egyptian, said the truck ran over a girl before it stopped right in front of him.

While someone else pulled the motionless girl out from under the truck, El Shafei said he started to yell at the driver.

He’d seen the truck swerve and the driver wrestle with the wheel before it stopped, he said, making him think this was an accident — a loss of control of the vehicle — until the shots rang out.

“I kept waving to him, ‘Stop, stop! There are people under your truck,’” El Shafei said.

Police urged people to run, he added. He thought, “The truck has a bomb or something or maybe he is a suicide guy.”

Summer Gifts for everyone on your list!

Put a smile on the heart with the power of flowers.

Collage Flowers

HWY 395, HERMISTON
541-567-4305
Mon-Sat 8am-6pm • Sun 12pm-5am
www.cottageflowersonline.com

Bruce Thomas Smith

Original Texas Roadhouse Rock

July 16 @ 8PM

RED LION HOTELS EST. 1989

Pendleton Red Lion Inn • 304 SE Nye Ave
Pendleton, Or 541.276.6111

Presented by www.glcproductions.com