

Turkey divided on easing headscarf ban

by UPI

ANKARA, Turkey -- Opposition parties in the Turkish government circulated a petition Wednesday to block the removal of a ban on women's headscarves at universities. The 50-page petition from the opposition Republican People's Party, or CHP, and Democratic Left Party asked the Constitutional Court to reverse amendments made to the Turkish Constitution that lifted the headscarf ban at universities, The New Anatolian said. The constitutional change approved by parliament and signed into law by President Abdullah Gul lifted the longstanding ban to make universities freer places for Turkish students. CHP leader Deniz Baykal said the measure was divisive and came at a time when Turkey needed a sense of national solidarity as it battled Kurdish rebels in northern Iraq, Today's Zaman reported. "At a time when Turkey was concerned about its troops on the front lines, the president hastily gave consent to this law without paying the slightest attention to the feelings of solidarity among the nation's members that emerged with the operation," Baykal said.

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