

Beat: Travel

MILAN EXPO-SECURITY IS PRIORITY

2600 EXTRA POLICE OFFICERS DEPLOYED

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USPA NEWS - Expo Commissioner Giuseppe Sala said the world's fair construction site aims to close definitively as such "by tomorrow lunchtime". "After that we will run some technical tests, and law enforcement will carry out a final sweep prior to the opening," Sala said.

As many as 2,600 extra police officers have been deployed in Milan amid extraordinary security for the Expo inauguration, police sources said Wednesday.

Meanwhile Italian police together with counterparts from the European Union and the Balkans are working together at a special desk to monitor and organise Expo, as requested by Italy police chief Alessandro Pansa. Police have also activated surveillance of potentially violent protest groups who might participate in anti-Expo protests so that they can be intercepted, the sources said.

"We have done what had to be done and taken all the measures necessary," said Milan Mayor Giuliano Pisapia. "One must never lower one's guard," he added. As well, ENAV national civil aviation agency said flights over the Expo location and Bresso airport will be suspended as of 00:01 on Thursday and until May 28. The suspension was ordered "on request of the Milan prefect for reasons of public order in relation to the imminent start of Expo 2015".

Police earlier in the day searched alleged anti-Expo activist locations in Milan's working class Giambellino neighborhood.

Digos anti-terror police are coordinating the investigation and the searches and some allegedly anarchist youths were taken in for questioning, police sources said. The action came after police on Tuesday found gas masks, reinforced clubs, and pickaxes during searches as part of a security operation ahead of Friday's official opening of the Expo world's fair on May 1.

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