
FRANCE EXTENDS STATE OF EMERGENCY FOR SIX MONTHS

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DW

French lawmakers voted at the National Assembly in the early hours of Wednesday morning to extend the country's state of emergency by six months.

In light of last Thursday's deadly terrorist attack in Nice, the Socialist French government had called for a three-month extension. The conservative opposition demanded six months, however.

Under the act, which was due to be discussed by the Senate on Wednesday, French authorities would continue to have the power to make house arrests without a court order. In future, searches would also be possible without a warrant.

Just hours before Thursday's attack in Nice, French President Francois Hollande said France's state of emergency would not be extended beyond July 26.

The state of emergency currently in place across France was implemented on the evening of November 13, last year, when "Islamic State"-affiliated militants launched several attacks across the capital Paris, leaving 130 people dead.

"We can't extend the state of emergency indefinitely, it would make no sense. That would mean we're no longer a republic with the rule of law applied in all circumstances," he told journalists in a traditional interview on Bastille Day.

The French president insisted that a new law adopted in May had also allowed France to bolster its security in the wake of the terrorist attacks.

The new law "will give us the tools which, while not comparable with the state of emergency, give us the means to keep tabs on certain individuals administratively," the president noted.

Hours later, Mohamed Lahouaiej Bouhlel, a 31-year-old resident of Nice born in Tunisia used a 19-metric-ton refrigerated truck to plow through revelers at Bastille Day celebrations.

After driving 2 kilometers (1.2 miles) through the crowd, Bouhlel was killed when he opened fire on police.

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