

# Police arrest 1300 in French riots ahead of teen's funeral

## International Desk

French police arrested more than 1,300 people during a fourth night of rioting ahead of the funeral of teenager Nahel M, whose shooting by police sparked the unrest that on Saturday prompted President Emmanuel Macron to postpone a trip to Germany.

Macron's government deployed 45,000 police officers as well as armoured vehicles overnight to tackle the worst crisis to face his leadership since the "Yellow Vest" protests which brought much of France to a standstill in late 2018, Reuters reported.

On Saturday afternoon, family and friends gathered for the service at a mosque in Nanterre, the Paris suburb where the 17-year-old was killed. The funeral was solemn and quiet, according to CNN's team on the ground, with people waiting in silence for his coffin to leave the mosque.

The boy's mother, Mounia, told television station France 5 on Friday that she blamed only the officer who shot her son, Nahel Merzouk, for his death. Nonetheless, the killing has sparked widespread destructive unrest and questions over whether race was a factor in his death.

Protests continued into the early hours of Saturday in defiance of a ban announced a day earlier on all "large-scale events" in the country, with rioting breaking out in several cities, CNN affiliate BFMTV reported.

France's Interior Ministry said on Twitter that 1,311



YVES HERMAN/REUTERS

people had been arrested overnight, compared with 875 the previous night, although it added the violence was "lower in intensity".

The ministry said Saturday that 2,560 fires had been reported on public roads, with 1,350 cars burned, and that there had been 234 incidents of damage or fire in buildings.

More than 200 police officers have been injured, Interior Minister Gerald Darmanin said, adding that the average age of those arrested was 17.

Friday night's arrests included 80 people in Marseille, home to many

people of North African descent.

## Macron postpones German visit

Macron postponed a state visit to Germany that was to begin today. It was the second time this year that unrest in France has forced Macron to postpone high profile encounters with a head of state after Britain's King Charles cancelled a visit due to protests over pension legislation, Reuters reported. Macron spoke on the phone on Saturday with German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier and briefed him on the situation, a spokesperson

for the German president said.

Yann Wernert, of the Jacques Delors Institute think tank in Berlin, said the postponed visit highlighted the unrest's impact on Macron's ability to conduct foreign policy.

## Shops ransacked

Looters have ransacked dozens of shops and torched 2,000 vehicles since the start of the riots, which have spread to cities such as Marseille, Lyon, Toulouse, Strasbourg and Lille.

Social media images showed an explosion rocking the old port area of the southern city, but no casu-

alties were reported.

Rioters in France's second-largest city had looted a gun store and stole hunting rifles, but no ammunition, police said.

Mayor Benoit Payan called on the government to send extra troops to tackle "pillaging and violence" in Marseille, where three police officers were slightly wounded on Saturday.

In Lyon, France's third-largest city, police deployed armoured personnel carriers and a helicopter, while in Paris, they cleared protesters from the Place de la Concorde. Lyon Mayor Gregory Doucet has also called for reinforcements.

## Hamas displays weapons for first time



The Gaza Strip-based Palestinian resistance movement of Hamas has put its weapons on public display for the first time, drawing hundreds of Palestinians brandishing rocket launchers for selfies.

Dressed in black balaclavas and tactical camouflage suits, members of the Ezzedine al-Qassam Brigades mingled with young men and women at the exhibition in Gaza City's Unknown Soldier's Square, AFP reported. "Resistance is an image and a memory. Take souvenir photos with many of Al-Qassam's weapons," the group said in an invitation on social media and posters in mosques. The event follows the latest surge in worsening violence, which cost 16 Palestinian and four Israeli lives in the occupied West Bank over six days in late June. In May, groups in Gaza and Israel traded fire for five days, killing 34 Palestinians. One Israeli woman died. Among the Hamas weapons on display in Gaza City on Friday were a range of locally manufactured missiles, "Shihab" drones, rocket-propelled grenade launchers and Russian-made "Kornet" missiles.

Exhibitions also took place on Saturday in the north and centre of the Gaza Strip, where people are normally forbidden to approach and photograph military sites.

The exhibition is "encouraging and means that the liberation of our land is near", said Gaza resident Shahadeh Dalou, who came with his children. Around 2.3 million Palestinians live in the impoverished Gaza Strip which has been under a crippling Israeli-led blockade since 2007. Israel and Palestinian resistant groups in Gaza have fought several wars since.



Rocket-propelled grenade launchers, drones and missiles were among the weapons on display.

MOHAMMED ABED/AFP

## German coalition at odds over fighter jet sale to Saudi Arabia

Germany's coalition government is at odds over whether to bow to British pressure and approve the production of Eurofighter Typhoon fighter jets for Saudi Arabia, the newspaper Welt Am Sonntag reported on Saturday, citing anonymous sources.

A deal struck by Riyadh and BAE Systems five years ago for the arms maker to supply 48 such jets was put on hold due to the war in Yemen, where Saudi-led forces intervened in 2015, Reuters reported.

A third of the components for the jets come from Germany, industry sources told Reuters at the time. Chancellor Olaf Scholz of the left-leaning Social Democrats (SPD) and Finance Minister Christian Lindner are leaning towards allowing the export, but the Greens, and parts of the SPD, are strongly against the move, according to the report.

Germany imposed a hard-line halt to arms sales to Riyadh following the killing of Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi in 2018, taking a far tougher approach than major allies such as the United States, France and Britain.

A March 2018 governing accord between then-chancellor Angela Merkel and the SPD banned arms sales to any parties to the war in Yemen, except for certain previously approved items and those that will remain in the purchasing country. Since the Yemen war ended, the British have argued that Germany cannot block the export of Eurofighter jets to third parties.



A Eurofighter Typhoon fighter jet performs a flying display at the 54th International Paris Airshow at Le Bourget Airport near Paris, France, on June 21, 2023.

BENOIT TESSIER/REUTERS



## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Dutch king makes historic apology for slavery



AFP - Dutch King Willem-Alexander issued a historic royal apology Saturday for the Netherlands' involvement in slavery, saying he felt "personally and intensely" affected.

Thousands of descendants of slaves from the South American nation of Suriname and the Caribbean islands of Aruba, Bonaire and Curacao attended the celebrations in Amsterdam for "Keti Koti" ("breaking the chains" in Surinamese) to commemorate 150 years since the practice was abolished.

### Wagner group may still exploit Africa post-mutiny: US official

BLOOMBERG - The Wagner mercenary group may continue its destabilizing security operations in Africa even after its chief Yevgeny Prigozhin launched - and later abandoned - an uprising against Russia's military leaders, a White House official said.

"We have no indication that Wagner is decreasing its intent to exploit African countries despite the events of last weekend," John Kirby, a spokesman for the White House's National Security Council, said in a briefing with reporters on Friday.

### Zelensky accuses 'some' Western partners of dragging feet



AFP - Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky on Saturday accused "some" Western partners of dragging their feet over plans to train Kyiv pilots to fly fighter jets. "Do they have an understanding of when Ukraine can get the F-16?" Zelensky told reporters, referring to the West. "There is no schedule of training missions. I believe that some partners are dragging their feet. Why are they doing it? I don't know."