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# FRANCE briefing: **June**

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# French National Developments

Major uprisings follow the murder of Muslim teenager Nahel by police, government subsequently gearing up for crackdown

- Nahel Merzouk, a 17 year-old Algerian-Moroccan delivery driver was shot dead by a police officer during a traffic stop on 27th June, day of Arafah.
- A video of the murder was shared on social media, contradicting initial police reports that sought to absolve the officer.

The police officer who murdered Nahel was then detained.

- A wave of uprisings subsequently took place across the country, lasting a week.

In a major display of force, the state deployed [45,000 police officers](#) and used military weapons - [armoured vehicles](#), [tear gas](#), flash grenades etc - in order to put down the unrest.

3200 individuals were arrested. [1056 were sentenced to imprisonment](#); 742 will serve their sentence in prison, while the remainder were granted conditional discharge.

- A fundraiser was set up by a former advisor to far-right leader Marine Le Pen to support the detained officer's family. It raised €1.6 million before being closed down by GoFundMe.

A large portion of the donation, however, was still due to be received by the officer's family.

- Macron and his government condemned the killing once the video became viral and the police's version was discredited; a move made to appease Muslim neighbourhoods and avoid a wave of outrage.

Once the uprisings started, official narratives shifted: the State focused on the rioters' actions without contextualising them. The rioters' legitimate grievances (namely police brutality, ghettoisation, Islamophobia) were silenced.

The government has now declared that it wants to financially punish the rioters' parents, in an act of collective punishment.

## Parliamentary Bills set to permit remote surveillance and increase military budget

- A new piece of legislation will allow authorities to [remotely activate devices](#) in order to gather evidence in "terrorism" cases. Authorities' ability to conduct night raids has been expanded as well.
- As a result of a modernisation drive, the Bill was introduced as a required update of the criminal justice system, and will include a significant increase of the Ministry of Justice's budget.
- Another Bill currently being discussed relates to the [budget and strategy](#) for the French military.

Once adopted, it will set up the military's program until 2030, and the military budget will be significantly increased.