

France Extends State of Emergency to Cover Euro 2016 Games



Paris, May 20 (RHC)-- The French parliament has extended the post-attacks state of emergency for two months to cover the prestigious European football games the country is to host. Lawmakers in the National Assembly, France's lower house of parliament, voted to endorse the extension by 46 votes to 20 on Thursday, a week after it was approved by a large majority in the upper house Senate.

France expects more than two million to visit the country for the Euro 2016 games between June 10 and July 10. The emergency law was imposed following November 13 attacks which killed 130 people in the capital Paris. The attacks, claimed by Daesh, a Takfiri group based in Iraq and Syria, also targeted a major football match between France and Germany at the Parc des Princes stadium.

The parliament had extended the law in February until May 26, giving the police the authority to hold people under house arrest whose behavior is considered "a threat to security and public order." Security forces were also allowed to carry out raids at homes without court order, but Thursday's extension suspended that special authority.

Interior Minister Bernard Cazeneuve said ahead of the vote that the terrorist threat still “remains at a high level,” and that France, like the European Union, is a target.

Exposed to the possibility whether France would cancel staging the Euro 2016, Prime Minister Manuel Valls had denied any such plan existed at all. And rights campaigners have criticized the extensions, saying the government was becoming “hooked on the state of emergency.”

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