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## Live updates: Egypt tense as army deadline passes; statement expected soon

48-hour deadline set by military passes, as both President Morsi and the opposition seem entrenched in their positions

Ahram Online, Wednesday 3 Jul 2013



Ittihadiya presidential palace on 3 July 2013, as anti-Morsi demonstrators wait for military statement (Photo: Bel Trew)

**18:35** Protests in the Nile Delta are still going strong, with hundreds of thousands rallying in iconic Thawra Square in the city of **Mansoura** in Daqahliya, Ahram Arabic reports. "The people already brought down the regime," protesters chanted. "Mansoura will turn you back into a banned group," went another in reference to the fact that the Muslim Brotherhood was forced to operate underground under former president Hosni Mubarak.

Protesters across the town continue to blockade a number of state institutions, in the fourth consecutive day of their civil disobedience campaign.

**18:30** An article on Ahram Arabic website quotes an anonymous source that says that the **armed forces** have extended their deadline in an effort to reach consensus and prevent further violence. The source explained that military leaders offered to postpone their statement for a few hours in order to cooperate on containing bloodshed and to guarantee the president's safety.

The source denied that Morsi had been arrested or placed on house arrest, contrary to circulating rumours, stating that the Republican Guard is still protecting the president at the Republican Guard headquarters. According to the source, head of the military Abdel-Fattah El-Sisi told President Morsi: "treachery is not part of the doctrine of the armed forces."

**18:20** The **military** are being deployed to separate the pro-Morsi protesters at Rabaa Al-Adawiya Mosque and the anti-Morsi demonstrators in front of the headquarters of the Ittihadiya presidential guard, reports Ahram Arabic.

**18:15** Egyptian security forces have imposed a **travel ban** on President Morsi, Muslim Brotherhood chief Mohammed Badie and his deputy Khairat Al-Shater over their involvement in prison escapes in 2011, security officials have told AFP news agency.

**18:10** In anticipation of the military's statement, anti-Morsi protesters are crowding **Tahrir Square** and **Ittihadiya** presidential palace. Both spaces look full.

There are also hundreds of thousands of Morsi's supporters at **Rabaa Al-Adawiya** Mosque in Nasr City. Everyone is waiting for the statement.

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Supporters of Egyptian President Mohamed Morsi shout slogans during a protest to show support to him at the Raba El-Adwiyia mosque square in Cairo July 3, 2013. (Photo: Reuters)

**18:00** There is a report on Ahram Arabic website that the army is beginning to deploy in **Giza** from the Dahshour barracks. There are lots of rumours circulating and it's hard to verify sources, although it's true that Giza was the site of deadly clashes yesterday.

**17:50** The anti-Morsi **Rebel** petition campaign has called on people to take the streets before the army announces its statement, expected soon.

Ahram Arabic reports that the campaign called on people to have faith in God, the people and the army, stressing that the military does not seek to get involved in politics. The campaign expressed its faith in the expected military statement saying it believed it will reflect the demands of the people.

'Rebel' reiterated the army warning against any possible killing of civilians saying that anyone caught involved would stand trial and would be held accountable by the people.

The campaign also added that it would stand against any foreign pressure, especially from the US, to leave Morsi in power.

The campaign organisers call on people to "go to the streets now and save your revolution."

**17:38** A key **Morsi** aide has released a statement in English calling recent events "a military coup." Essam El-Haddad, presidential assistant on Foreign Relations & International Cooperation, writes on his official Facebook page:

"Hundreds of thousands of them have gathered in support of democracy and the Presidency. And they will not leave in the face of this attack. To move them, there will have to be violence. It will either come from the army, the police, or the hired mercenaries. Either way there will be considerable bloodshed."

"Yesterday, the President received an initiative from an alliance of parties supporting constitutional legitimacy. He discussed it with the Prime Minister and the Minister of Defense and all three of them agreed that it presented an excellent path for Egypt out of its current impasse. The initiative called for a full change of cabinet, a prime minister acceptable to all, changing the public prosecutor, agreement on constitutional amendments, and a reconciliation commission."

"And let us also be clear. The President did not have to offer all these concessions. In a democracy, there are simple consequences for the situation we see in Egypt: the President

loses the next election or his party gets penalized in the upcoming parliamentary elections. Anything else is mob rule."

**17:36** More anti-Morsi protests in the Nile Delta. In **Sharqiya**, President Morsi's hometown, crowds of protesters are congregating outside the president's residence there, chanting anti-regime slogans. Protesters say they will begin an open-ended sit-in until their demands are met, threatening to bring the whole city to a halt.

Other demonstrators continue to shut down entrances to the municipal governor's office, banning employees from entering.

**17:35** Twenty people were injured after clashes between pro- and anti-Morsi protesters in the northern Delta governorate of **Damietta** near Souq Al-Hassaba Square, reports Ahram Arabic.

**17:30** Opposition leader Hamdeen **Sabbahi** has called on all Egyptians to rally in the streets as an expression of the "success of the revolution," via his official Twitter account, in anticipation of the military's statement.

**17:25** State news agency MENA reports that the police are handing out juice and water to anti-Morsi protesters in **Tahrir Square**.



Opponents of Egypt's Islamist President Mohammed Morsi shout slogans during a protest in Tahrir Square in Cairo, Egypt, Wednesday, July 3, 2013 (Photo: AP)

**17:20** Still no army statement, although some local television channels are broadcasting rumours that President **Morsi** has been put under house arrest, causing crowds in Tahrir to celebrate.

**17:00** In **Alexandria**, the site of major clashes over the last week between pro- and anti-Morsi groups, thousands are now flocking to Al-Qaed Ibrahim Square in the city centre and to Sidi Gaber district to hold anti-Morsi rallies. There are also big crowds marching along the seafront. Police forces are hovering across several streets and squares to ensure security.

**16:50** The president's office issued a statement reaffirming **Morsi's** commitment to the roadmap announced in his speech yesterday, which includes the forming of a coalition government and a committee to amend the constitution.

**16:45 Tahrir Square** is starting to fill up with anti-Morsi demonstrators, with the central square partially full while surrounding streets are still relatively empty. Thousands are also starting to flock to Alexandria's Sidi Gaber train station to demonstrate.

There are also reports of anti-Morsi demonstrators gathering in Sharqiya, Menoufiya, Port Said and Mansoura.

**16:40** The rhetoric of the **Islamist** supporters at the Rabaa Al-Adawiya press conference was largely defiant, like President Morsi's speech last night.

"We call upon all Egyptians to take to the streets and stand against the attempt to overthrow legitimacy," Islamist politician Magdy Hussein stated.

He further asked protesters to raise their national identity cards as proof of them being Egyptian, claiming police chose not to protect them during the clashes on Tuesday night because they were told "you were not Egyptians".

**16:30** The **military's** 48 hour deadline has now expired. The armed forces have said that they are meeting with religious, national, political and youth leaders now, and we're expecting a statement soon.

**16:25** The National Association for Change (NAC), a pro-democracy umbrella group of liberal, leftists and Brotherhood activists formed in 2010 to coordinate opposition against Hosni Mubarak's rule. has issued a statement warning all "foreign states, entities and institutes" against interfering in Egypt's internal matters asserting that any attempts of intervention would be a de facto declaration of war on Egypt.

In their statement, the NAC addressed the **US** in particular, criticising its ongoing interference "obviously reflected in their recent actions and statements."

The NAC also called on Hamas and other Arab groups to understand "the danger of interfering in internal matters, or the involvement in the complicated struggle between the people and the groups of local and global terrorism."

Anti-Americanism has been a feature of some of the anti-Morsi protests recently, with some protesters arguing that the US is too close to the Muslim Brotherhood. A statement released this evening by Coptic rights group the Maspero Youth Union also warned the American people that their president and US ambassador to Egypt Anne Patterson support "a fascist group [the Brotherhood] that oppresses minorities."

**16:25** Several miles away from the Ittihadiya presidential palace, a focal point of mass opposition rallies since Sunday, anti-regime protesters have started to congregate outside Egypt's **defence ministry** as the deadline of the military ultimatum draws nearer. The group of pro-army protesters have been holding a sit-in at the location for 12 days.

**16:20** A press conference is underway by the **Islamist** supporters of President Morsi, the National Alliance to Support Legitimacy, at Rabaa Al-Adawiya mosque.

"The president spoke to the people last night and explained the situation and outlined his road map for resolving the current crisis in Egypt," a statement read by Magdy Hussein of the Islamic Labour Party said.

"We are the constitution, we are legitimacy, we are freedom, we are revolution...Thirty years and the army didn't challenge Mubarak, it didn't go to war with Israel; but it challenges the legitimacy of the democratic president.... If the army enters politics it's the end of the constitution" said Hussein.

**16:10** Ahram Arabic website reports that in a number of governorates, protesters are blocking roads and besieging governorate buildings in the run up to the military's anticipated statement.

In the city of **Kafr El-Sheikh**, protesters who have besieged the governorate headquarters announced they will keep doing so until Morsi resigns, announcing their rejection of recently-appointed Muslim Brotherhood governor Saad El-Husseini.

In the Gharbiya city of **Tanta** in the Delta, members of youth protest groups shut the gate to the Gharbiya governorate headquarters with metal chains and prevented employees from entering the building in response to the call for **civil disobedience** by 'Rebel' campaign.

In **Menoufiya**, hometown of former president Mubarak, a group of protesters blocked one of the city's main roads.

**16:00** Welcome to Ahram Online's live updates. On Monday, the Egyptian supreme council of the armed forces responded to mass protests by issuing an ultimatum to political forces, saying that unless "the people's demands are met" within 48 hours, the army would impose its own roadmap. The 48-hour deadline will be up today at 4:30pm Cairo time.

Today's key developments so far:

- The army has said that there is no time set for its statement.
- President Mohamed Morsi and the group which he hails from, the Muslim Brotherhood seem entrenched in their position and reluctant to make any concessions.
- The opposition, including the anti-Morsi 'Rebel' campaign that spearheaded the 30 June protests, and the coalition group the National Salvation Front also show no sign of backing down. Rebel has nominated three of its organisers to negotiate on its behalf, while the rest of the opposition have put forward liberal politician Mohamed ElBaradei. Negotiations are currently going on between ElBaradei and different political factions. Head of the Brotherhood's Freedom and Justice Party Saad El-Katatni refused an invitation by the military to meet with ElBaradei.
- The Islamist supporters of the president are expected to hold a press conference soon. There were initial reports that key Morsi allies Al-Gamaa Al-Islamiya were calling on President Morsi to hold a referendum on early presidential elections, but the group has denied this.
- The interior ministry released a statement saying that it will stand "side by side" with the army, and will address any violence.
- There are still tens of thousands of Morsi supporters camped out at Rabaa Al-Adawiya Mosque in Cairo's Nasr City, and a similar number of anti-Morsi protesters in Tahrir Square. There is also an anti-Morsi gathering at Ittihadiya presidential palace in Heliopolis.

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