

Yemen government bans protests in Aden ahead of separatist deadline

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Yemen's internationally-recognised government said on Saturday it had banned public gatherings in Aden ahead of a deadline given by southern separatists.

An armoured vehicle is seen as government forces clash with Houthis and pro-Saleh forces during an operation in Taiz province, Yemen on April 6, 2017

Yemen: Yemen's internationally-recognised government said on Saturday it had banned public gatherings in Aden ahead of a deadline given by southern separatists to President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi to dismiss the cabinet, according to a Reuters report.

Tensions have risen in the southern port city since the United Arab Emirates-allied Southern Transitional Council vowed to overthrow the government of Ahmed bin Daghr unless Hadi dismissed his cabinet within a week.

The Southern Transitional Council has accused bin Daghr's government of starving Yemenis and pushing the impoverished country to the verge of famine.

The crisis could jeopardize a rare opportunity offered by the death of former President Ali Abdullah Saleh last month that had given a Saudi-led coalition the chance to isolate Iran-aligned Houthi fighters and end a devastating war that began in 2015.

In a statement carried by the state-run Saba news agency, the Yemeni Interior Ministry said it had "decided to ban any gatherings, sit-ins or marches in the interim capital, Aden."

"These actions will be considered acts that target stability and calm," the statement said, adding that all armed groups will also be banned from entering Aden.

Trying to head off any protests, Bin Daghr's office said the prime minister met with senior commanders of the Saudi-led coalition in Aden.

"The meeting expressed its utter opposition to any call for chaos, violence or vandalism in the interim capital, Aden," bin Daghr's office said in a statement.

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