France vows to step up drugs fight after police vehicles torched

AFP – The French government on Wednesday vowed to intensify the fight against drug related crime after four police vehicles were torched outside a police station in an apparent revenge attack in response to a new crackdown.
The four vehicles were reduced to burned out wrecks outside the police station in the southern town of Cavaillon where security forces are now enforcing a nationwide operation against drugs crime.

Three police were present at the time when a group of individuals passed by in the early hours of the morning, local authorities said. No-one was hurt.

France's new Interior Minister Bruno Retailleau, who has vowed an uncompromising approach on re-establishing order since taking office, said he was sending his deputy Nicolas Daragon to the town and as well as a special unit of CRS anti-riot police.

"The state will not be intimidated and we will intensify our fight against drug trafficking and banditry," he wrote on X.

"I will place the fight against organised crime at the centre of my work because it constitutes an attack on our institutions," he added.

The government under new Prime Minister Michel Barnier, appointed last month by President Emmanuel Macron, is acutely are of the concerns among the French over how drug crime is crippling daily life in many parts of the country.

Marseille, France's second-largest city but also one of its poorest, is plagued by drug-related violence which last week

saw a 15-year-old boy “stabbed 50 times” and burned alive and a 36-year-old was shot and killed by a 14-year-old.

French police earlier Wednesday said they had also arrested a leading member of the so-called Mocro Maffia, a cocaine-dealing gang operating mostly out of Belgium and the Netherlands.

AFP