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Dozens Arrested as Pro-Palestinian Demonstrations Challenge Terror Law Classification

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Over the weekend, more than 100 individuals were arrested across the United Kingdom during a coordinated wave of protests opposing the government's decision to designate the activist group Palestine Action as a terrorist organisation. Over the weekend, more than 100 individuals were arrested across the United Kingdom during a coordinated wave of protests opposing the government's decision to designate the direct-action group Palestine Action

as a terrorist organisation. Demonstrations, spearheaded by the campaign group Defend Our Juries, took place in cities including London, Manchester, Edinburgh, Bristol, and Truro.

The most prominent protest unfolded in Parliament Square, London, where demonstrators gathered near the Mahatma Gandhi statue holding placards that read: “I oppose genocide, I support Palestine Action.” The most prominent protest unfolded in Parliament Square, London, where demonstrators gathered near the Mahatma Gandhi statue holding placards that read: “I oppose genocide, I support Palestine Action,” according to organisers. According to the Metropolitan Police, at least 55 individuals were arrested under Section 13 of the Terrorism Act 2000, which prohibits the display of support for proscribed organisations. The department stated that officers carried out targeted searches, seized banners, and detained participants after repeated warnings were ignored.

Palestine Action, which has been involved in numerous high-profile direct action campaigns against companies linked to the Israeli defence sector, was officially banned by the UK government earlier this month. Palestine Action, which has been involved in direct action campaigns targeting companies linked to the Israeli defence sector, was officially banned by the UK government earlier this month. The decision followed what officials described as a pattern of unlawful activity and disruption, including repeated attacks on property and infrastructure. The decision followed what officials described as a pattern of unlawful activity and disruption, including repeated acts of property damage and infrastructure sabotage. Its classification as a terror group now makes it a criminal offence to be a member of, support, or promote the organisation in any form. Its classification as a terrorist organisation makes it a criminal offence to be a member of, support, or promote the group in any form.

Saturday’s events, which some campaigners claimed to be the “largest demonstration in Westminster” on this issue to date, highlight growing tensions between freedom of expression and national security concerns. Critics argue that the use of anti-terror legislation against protesters undermines the public’s right to political expression. Critics argue that the use of anti-terror legislation against protesters risks undermining the public’s right to political expression. However, supporters of the classification note the group’s history of aggressive tactics and say that public safety must take precedence.

Despite arrests and police intervention, Defend Our Juries remained defiant, posting on social media that the crackdown only “proves the government’s fear of public opinion.”

Authorities have yet to confirm whether formal charges will be brought against those detained.

The UK government's stance on such activism reflects an increasingly assertive approach to national security, particularly in matters involving international conflict and domestic unrest. As tensions over the Israel-Palestine issue continue to spill into British streets, the balance between safeguarding public order and preserving democratic freedoms remains a key point of contention.