

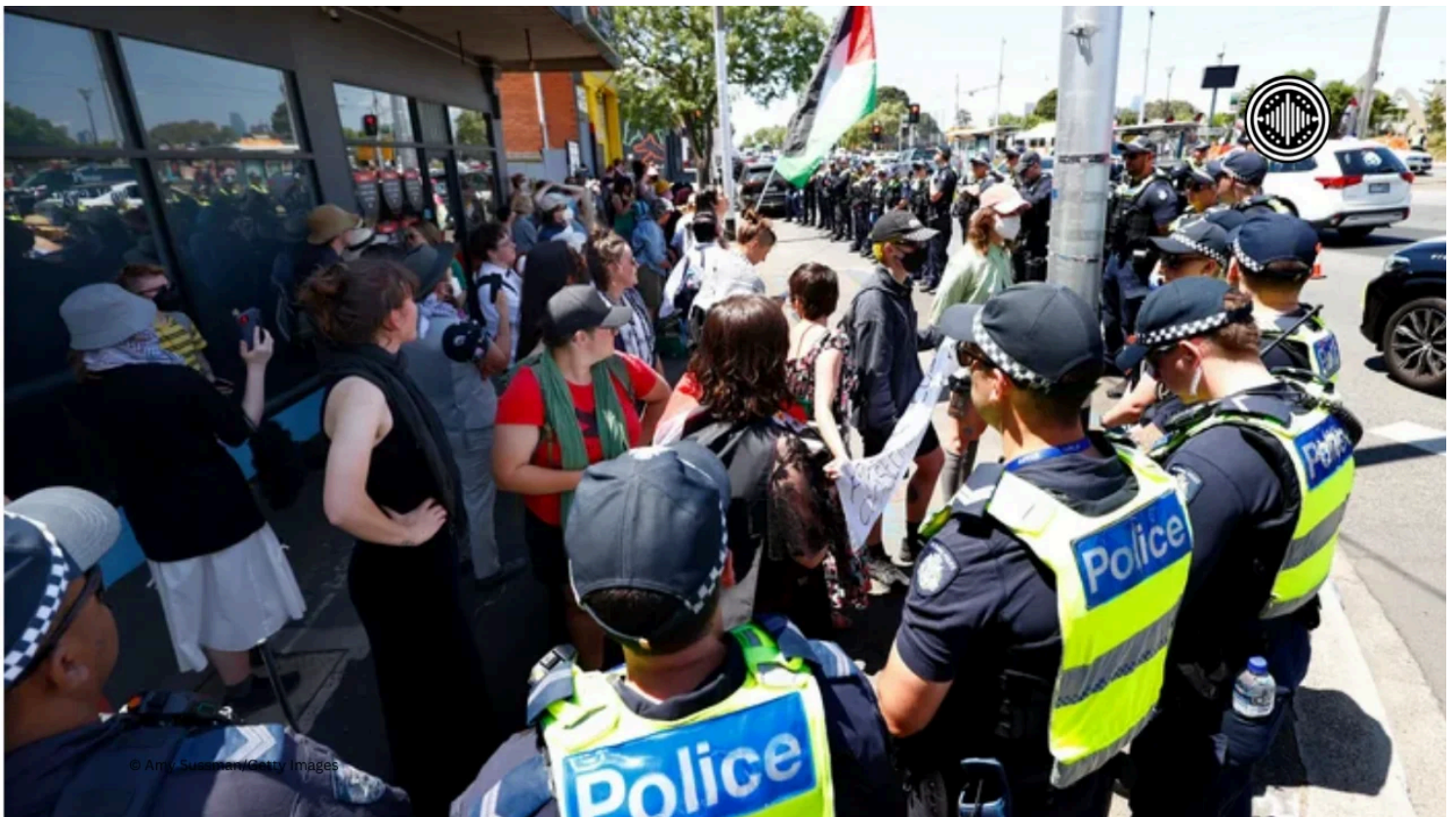
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Melbourne Police Arrest Four During CBD Protest Clashes

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– Categories: Crime



MELBOURNE – Four people were arrested on Saturday following confrontations between police and protesters in Melbourne's central business district. The clashes occurred near the Victorian Parliament, where a rally titled Women Will Speak was being held.

Police reported that a group of counter-protesters, dressed in black and with faces covered, engaged with officers on Russell Street during the morning. In response, police used OC spray, conducted approximately 145 searches, and directed several individuals to remove face coverings.

Authorities estimated around 120 people attended the Women Will Speak rally, while about 80 counter-protesters were present. Three officers were injured during the incidents but did not require hospitalization.

Arrests included:

- A 21-year-old man from Flemington, allegedly striking a police officer with an umbrella.
- A 19-year-old woman from Wallington and a 27-year-old man from Coburg, both alleged to be in possession of flares.
- A 33-year-old man from Oakleigh South, arrested for failing to comply with police directions to move on.

Police emphasized that the arrests were made to maintain public safety and ensure lawful conduct during the events.

Prior to the rally, Jasmine Sussex from Women's Voices Australia stated via Facebook that the event aimed to urge the Victorian government to "stop conflating sex and gender identity in policy and law." Women's Voices Australia describes itself on social media as an organisation "working to maintain and strengthen women's and girls' sex-based rights."

The incidents reflect ongoing tensions surrounding public demonstrations and debates over gender and sex-based rights in Victoria. Law enforcement officials said they are reviewing the events and will take necessary action against unlawful behaviour.

Authorities continue to encourage lawful protests while reminding participants of their responsibilities to avoid confrontations or disruptions in public areas.