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London, May 6 (RHC)-- British police have arrested leading republican movement and other organizers of an anti-monarchist protest, ahead of King Charles' coronation on Saturday. A photo posted on Twitter showed Graham Smith, head of anti-monarchist group Republic, sitting on the ground surrounded by a group of police officers. An officer at the scene said several republican protesters had been arrested.

A republic activist said in London's Trafalgar Square, that, "They've arrested six of our organizers and seized hundreds of placards, they won't tell us why they've arrested them or where they're being held."

London police chief Mark Rowley had warned on Friday that there would be a "very low tolerance for disruption" on the streets in central London where tens of thousands of people have gathered to watch the royal processions.

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Yasmine Ahmed, the UK director of Human Rights Watch, condemned the arrests, saying, "The reports of people being arrested for peacefully protesting the coronation are incredibly alarming." "Peaceful protests allow individuals to hold those in power to account, something the UK government seems increasingly averse to."

More than 11,000 police officers are on patrol for the coronation, the biggest ceremonial event to be held in the British capital in 70 years. Rowley said before the event that the police would act if the protesters wanted to prevent the joy of a significant number of people.

The expensive ceremony comes as the latest figures show the UK's inflation stands at over 10 percent; the highest in four decades. The inflationary spiral is growing at a much faster pace than the average pay rise across the country, with food prices skyrocketing almost 20 percent. Increasing energy prices, along with soaring energy costs, have also largely contributed to the UK's cost-of-living crisis.

Many labor unions have launched industrial actions to press the government to enact salary hikes. The government, however, refuses to increase salaries, saying it would increase the inflation. Experts, however, blame the existing crisis on Britain's leadership incompetence and turbulence that saw the country change several prime ministers over the past two years.

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