

London's Gaza rally organizer among those detained by Met police

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Chris Nineham, the vice-chair of the Stop the War Coalition, who served as the chief steward for

the national protest for Palestine is seen gesturing from a police van in central London on January 18, 2025. (Photo by Palestinian Solidarity Campaign)

London, January 19 (RHC)-- A pro-Palestinian rally organizer in the UK was detained by the Metropolitan Police, just hours before the ceasefire between the Israelis and Palestinians went into effect in the Gaza Strip.

London's Met Police arrested 70 pro-Palestinian demonstrators on Saturday during a rally in central London. Chris Nineham, the vice-chair of the Stop the War Coalition, who served as the chief steward for the national protest for Palestine, is among those arrested by police.

Chris Nineham, the founder of the anti-war group Stop the War Coalition, has been arrested during a pro-Palestine march in Central London.

Riot police dressed in full gear surrounded Nineham and bundled him into the back of a police van after a small group of demonstrators reportedly proceeded from Whitehall Street to Trafalgar to lay flowers in the Square in commemoration of the deaths of Palestinian children.

In video footage showing Nineham's arrest, demonstrators can be heard shouting "shame on you" at the police while chanting "Free, free Palestine."

According to the police, 77 demonstrators were arrested. Some of the demonstrators had been arrested on suspicion of breaching protest conditions, and some others over offenses including assault, support of a proscribed group, and obstructing police.

A "coordinated effort" was underway by the pro-Palestine demonstration organizers to breach the perimeter of the rally, the Met Police said in its statement. There had been a "coordinated effort led by the protest organizers to march out of Whitehall in a clear breach of the conditions," the Met said, adding that it was launching an investigation.

The Met Police had restricted the pro-Palestinian demonstrators from entering Trafalgar Square, limiting the rally to Whitehall Street, the place where the main British government offices were located.

However, British police officials justified the illegal arrests, likening the peaceful pro-Palestinian rally to an unlawful activity and "criminality."

"This is the highest number of arrests we have seen, in response to the most significant escalation in criminality," the Met police commander Adam Slonecki claimed in a statement, adding, "Investigations are now underway and we will make every effort to bring prosecutions against those we identify."

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