

Police fire tear gas at PTI workers as arrests climb to over 30 in D-Chowk crackdown

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RAWALPINDI/ ISLAMABAD:

Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) supporters began gathering at Islamabad's D-Chowk on Friday, prompting police to fire tear gas in an effort to disperse them. According to reports, four more PTI workers were arrested at the scene, bringing the total number of arrests at D-Chowk to six.

Nationwide, over 30 PTI members have been detained in various locations. In response to the PTI protest, authorities sealed all routes leading into Islamabad, effectively cutting off access from Rawalpindi. At the Burhan Interchange, clashes erupted between the Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (K-P) convoy and the police, with tear gas used to control the situation. Several PTI workers were arrested at the scene. Islamabad police confirmed that three individuals were arrested from D-Chowk, including two civilians and one PTI supporter. Tear gas was used to push back the

protesters, who retaliated by chanting slogans against the police. In Rawalpindi, key roads, including Murree Road, have been blocked for 16 hours, causing severe disruption. Public transport is off the roads, and even motorcyclists are facing difficulties due to the containers and barricades. Despite heavy security, a female PTI supporter managed to reach D-Chowk, where she shouted slogans in favour of PTI and against the government. Her arrival sparked chaos among the police, who swiftly detained her and moved her to the station. Several major roads, including Cheering Cross, MH Chowk, and Mall Road in Saddar, have been sealed from both sides, while other key points in Rawalpindi, such as Flashman Road, Marrir Chowk, and Double Road Stadium, remain closed. Rawalpindi's City Traffic Police have advised citizens to avoid unnecessary travel due to the ongoing unrest. Motorcycle access is permitted on major roads linking the twin cities, but entry into Islamabad's Red Zone remains completely blocked. Amidst the blockade, Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) assured that domestic and international flights would continue as scheduled. Passengers are advised to plan their airport journeys carefully, using alternative routes. In Punjab, Section 144 has been imposed in Lahore, Rawalpindi, Attock, and Sargodha, with a ban on political gatherings, protests, and demonstrations. Rangers have been deployed in Rawalpindi, Attock, and Lahore to maintain law and order during the protests. Rawalpindi Metro Bus services remain suspended, and double-riding on motorcycles is

prohibited across the city. Islamabad police continue to enforce Section 144, urging citizens not to engage in illegal activities.