
Man arrested after climbing Big Ben in protest



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A man was arrested after scaling the Elizabeth Tower at the Palace of Westminster in a pro-Palestinian protest. Emergency services responded at 07:24 GMT on Saturday after reports of a barefoot protester holding a Palestinian flag on the tower's ledge.

Despite police negotiations, the man refused to descend, remaining on the structure for over 16 hours. Specialist officers, along with the London Fire Brigade, used a crane to bring him down safely just as Big Ben struck midnight. He was arrested upon reaching the ground.

Westminster Police described the incident as “protracted” due to the complexities of ensuring safety. “We worked with multiple agencies to resolve the situation while minimizing risk,” a spokesperson said.

The protest led to significant disruptions, including the closure of Westminster Bridge, part of Westminster Underground Station, and Bridge Street. Parliamentary estate tours were also canceled. A parliamentary spokesperson confirmed a review of the incident.

Throughout the day, the man sat on the ledge, draping a keffiyeh scarf around the tower’s stonework. Supporters behind a police cordon at Victoria Embankment chanted “Free Palestine” and called him a “hero.”

Video footage showed him resisting police intervention, stating he would descend on his “own terms.” The Metropolitan Police later imposed conditions to prevent serious disruption, relocating demonstrators from Parliament Square to a nearby street.