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Banned Hizb ut flexes its muscles

Staff Correspondent

Police picked up 15 members of banned religious outfit Hizb ut-Tahrir Bangladesh yesterday when they brought out a procession in the capital's Paltan area to hold a rally at Muktangan.

At least 10 persons including a policeman sustained minor injuries as the law enforcers used batons to break up the procession around 12:30pm.

Witnesses said some 60 activists of Hizb ut-Tahrir started the procession and marched towards Muktangan to hold the pre-scheduled rally.

At one stage police intercepted them near the Paltan intersection and used batons to disperse them.

Bringing out another procession, some of them tried to go to Muktangan taking another lane, but police again barred them resulting in a scuffle.

Chases and counter-chases also took place between the law enforcers and the outfit members.

Injured patrol inspector Abu Hazzaz of Motijheel Police Station received treatment at Dhaka Medical College Hospital for cuts to his head.

Anwar Hossain, deputy commissioner (Motijheel division) of police, said they dispersed the Hizb ut-Tahrir activists as it is a banned militant outfit.

Law enforcers will arrest them wherever they are found, he noted.

Paltan police last night filed a case against the 15 arrestees under the Speedy Trial Act, 2002 for obstructing policemen in discharging their duties and assaulting them.

A strong contingent of police surrounded the Muktangan area from the morning to foil the programme.

Earlier, the banned Islamist outfit had pasted a huge number of posters on city walls declaring to hold the rally.

The posters visible at different strategic points contained various calls including establishment of Khilafat system (an Islamic system of governance) by ousting the present government.

The government banned the organisation on October 22 in 2009 citing it had been carrying out subversive and anti-democratic activities in the country.

Hizb ut-Tahrir--an international Islamist political party--was founded in Jerusalem in 1953. It started its activities in Bangladesh in 2000.



A police official bleeds as he is injured in a clash with members of banned outfit Hizb ut-Tahrir at Purana Paltan in the capital yesterday. Photo: STAR