

Far-right protesters clash with police in London



London, June 14 (RHC)-- Far-right protesters clashed in London on Saturday with anti-racism demonstrators and police trying to keep the two sides apart after they rallied in London in rival demonstrations, despite strict restrictions and warnings to stay home to contain the coronavirus.

Fights broke out between groups outside London's Waterloo station, with fireworks thrown before police cordoned off areas. On a nearby bridge, stones were lobbed at police. Sporadic skirmishes continued in central areas.

Commenting on the incident, British Prime Minister Boris Johnson said in a Tweet: "Racist thuggery has no place on our streets. Anyone attacking our police will be met with the full force of the law."

"Racist thuggery has no place on our streets. Anyone attacking the police will be met with full force of the law. These marches & protests have been subverted by violence and breach current guidelines. Racism has no part in the UK and we must work together to make that a reality."

Demonstrations have been taking place around the world and in parts of the United Kingdom over the death of African American George Floyd in Minneapolis last month after a white policeman knelt on his neck for nearly nine minutes.

The Metropolitan Police said in a statement they had arrested five people for offences including violent disorder and assault on police and that six officers had suffered minor injuries. The ambulance service said it had treated 15 people.

In the UK, a debate is raging over monuments to those involved in its imperialist past, especially after the statue of slave trader Edward Colston was torn down and thrown into the harbour of Bristol port last weekend. In London, a statue of Winston Churchill was daubed with the words "was a racist".

In and around Parliament Square earlier on Saturday afternoon, hundreds of people wearing football shirts, chanting "England, England", and describing themselves as patriots, gathered alongside military veterans to guard the Cenotaph war memorial.

"Winston Churchill, he's one of our own," they chanted, near his statue.

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