# High Court deems government regulations extending police powers on protests as unlawful



The High Court has ruled that recent government regulations extending police powers to crack down on protests are unlawful. The rules, introduced by the Home Office last year under ex-home secretary Suella Braverman, aimed to reduce the threshold for what constitutes "serious disruption" from protests, changing it from "significant" and "prolonged" to "more than minor". They also allowed police to consider cumulative disruption from repeated protests.

These changes were passed despite being previously rejected by the House of Lords. Civil liberties group Liberty challenged the legality of these regulations, arguing that the Home Office overstepped its authority and did not conduct a fair consultation. In February, Liberty’s lawyers requested the court to quash the provisions, which they described as unlawful.

On Tuesday, Lord Justice Green and Mr Justice Kerr agreed with Liberty, ruling that the Home Office lacked the authority to lower the disruption threshold and had failed to conduct a fair consultation process. The judges stated that “more than minor” disruption does not align with the ordinary meaning of "serious" disruption as intended by the enabling legislation.

Despite the ruling, the Home Office has announced plans to appeal the decision. An order to quash the legislation will be on hold until the appeal is resolved. Liberty's director, Akiko Hart, described the ruling as a significant victory for democracy and accountability.