

Turkish president's bodyguards beat up protesters in Washington DC; 9 hurt, 2 arrested

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Washington: Protests outside the Turkish ambassador's residence in Washington DC turned violent on Tuesday while Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan was visiting.

Photo: AP. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan is visiting the US

Fighting broke out as Erdogan supporters and Armenian protesters gathered outside the residence. Local media reported that Erdogan supporters and security guards clashed with Kurdish and Armenian protesters.

The altercation was captured on camera, and resulted in nine people being hurt.

Voice of America posted a video of the altercation in which Erdogan's bodyguards were purportedly captured beating and kicking people.

Authorities said nine people were hurt and two arrests were made in connection with the incident.

Doug Buchanan, a DC Fire and EMS spokesman, said two of those hurt were seriously injured and were taken to hospitals by ambulance. He said by phone that emergency personnel were called to the residence about 4:30 p.m. Tuesday.

Metropolitan Police Department spokesman Dustin Sternbeck said the altercation broke out between two groups but he didn't elaborate on the circumstances. He says two people were arrested, including one who was charged with assaulting a police officer.

The altercation came the same day that Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan met with President Donald Trump at the White House. The State Department declined to comment.

Armenians have regularly demonstrated outside the embassy trying to call attention to what they say is the Genocide of April 1915.

They claim 1.5 million of their people were killed under Ottoman, but Turkey says it was due to the civil war and thousands of Turks were also killed.

- (With AP inputs)