

17 more protesters facing prosecution

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At least 17 more Diaoyu Islands activists who petitioned the Japanese Consulate last month will be prosecuted for unlawful assembly once they are identified.

Seven others who were identified and charged on Thursday night condemned the move yesterday.

Deputy Central District Commander, Senior Superintendent David Madoc-Jones, rejected the idea that the prosecution - decided by the Legal Department - contained political elements.

Police sources said they were having problems identifying the rest of the protesters who staged a rally in the reception area of the consulate on October 9.

"They will at least be charged with unlawful assembly if identified," a source said. Police are understood to be using footage from television news bulletins and the consulate's close-circuit television to identify them.

The seven charged with unlawful assembly are legislators Tsang Kin-shing and Albert Ho Chun-yan, Wong Tai Sin district board member Lo Chiu-fai, Chan Yu-nam, who planted a flag on the Diaoyus, Kwun Tong District Board member Choy Chak-hung, chairman of Hong Kong People's Council on Public Housing Policy Lo Hom-chau and Leung Kwok-hung from the April 5th Action Group.

Leung, Lo Chiu-fai, Chan and Choy were additionally summonsed for allegedly assaulting constables Ng Man-ho and Yau Chun-ki and station sergeant Yau Siu-hang.

The seven are required to appear in Western Court on December 12.

The maximum penalty for unlawful assembly is a fine of \$5,000 and three years' imprisonment.

Assaulting a police officer can bring a fine of \$5,000 and imprisonment for six months.