

TIMOL RALLY HIT BY 14-DAY BAN

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THE Government today placed an overall 14-day ban on all open-air political meetings in the Magisterial District of Johannesburg and in neighbouring magisterial districts.

Although not specifically mentioned in the notice in today's Government Gazette, it is clear that the prohibition is aimed at the mass rally being planned for Sunday to commemorate the second anniversary of Mr. Ahmed Timol's death.

A Terrorism Act detainee, Mr Timol died two years ago while in police detention at John Vorster Square in Johannesburg.

In a statement today Mr R. Pelsler, the Minister of Justice, said that the prohibition would affect the "assembly in any public place in the Magisterial District of Johannesburg and other neighbouring districts, of any public gathering at which any form of State or any principle or policy of the Government, is propagated, defended, attacked, criticised or discussed, or which is held in protest against or in support of or in commemoration of anything."

"I deem this action expedient for the maintenance of the public peace as a result of political activities by certain individuals and organisations."

Mr Pelsler said that, in terms of the definition of a public place contained in the Riotous Assemblies Act of 1956, public gatherings which took place

within the walls of a building would not be affected.

"In view of the restrictive scope of the type of gathering affected, normal activities ought not to be interfered with."

Mr Pelsler said that he had issued instructions to the magistrates of the districts concerned authorising them to grant exemptions to the prohibition.

The Timol memorial rally is scheduled for 2.30 pm on Sunday in Vrededorp's Queens Park. It was planned that a multiracial crowd would be addressed by Black leaders.

The Government prohibition means that the rally will have to be abandoned or else the organisers will have to hold one on a much smaller scale

indoors.

The Johannesburg City Council had agreed to the organisers holding the rally to commemorate the death of Mr Timol and 21 others who died while in detention, and to call for the release of all political prisoners.

The organisers of the "Ahmed Timol Memorial" will hold an emergency meeting tonight.

The notice in today's Government Gazette (in terms of the Riotous Assemblies Act) applies the prohibition to the following magisterial districts:

Alberton, Benoni, Boksburg, Brakpan, Germiston, Heidelberg, Johannesburg, Kempton Park, Krugersdorp, Nigel, Pretoria, Randfontein, Roodepoort, Springs, Vanderbijlpark, Vereeniging and Westonaria.