

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL WEB FEATURE

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Myanmar demonstrators defiant in face of escalating repression

The situation in Myanmar (formerly Burma) continues to worsen with reports emerging of escalating attempts by the authorities to repress ongoing demonstrations.

There have been media reports of at least four people killed today (Thursday) as the military fired shots to disperse crowds of protesters. Earlier reports described widespread use of tear gas against demonstrators and hundreds of arrests and beatings.

Further reports suggest the government is trying to shut down internet and telephone links to the outside world after a stream of blogs and mobile phone videos began capturing the dramatic events on the streets.

But information is also emerging that there is growing defiance in the face of the authorities as tens of thousands of Buddhist monks and pro-democracy activists continue to take to the streets.

The mass demonstrations are the biggest the country has seen since 1988 when thousands were killed as security forces used deadly force against massive pro-democracy demonstrations.

Violence and bloodshed

Amnesty International is deeply concerned at the growing possibility of violence and bloodshed in the country.

Amnesty International has called on the international community to act urgently and for the UN Security Council to visit the country immediately. In a letter to the President of the Security Council, Amnesty International also called on them to consider the possibility of imposing an arms embargo on Myanmar. Countries that have influence over Myanmar -- for example the ASEAN countries -- also need to increase the pressure on the Myanmar authorities.

Demonstrations around the world

Amnesty International members around the world have begun a series of demonstrations outside Burmese embassies and high profile public locations calling for the Myanmar authorities not to respond with violence and to respecting the human right to peaceful protest.

A demonstration is being held in London today (Thursday) and further demonstrations have been held in Washington, Switzerland and the Netherlands. This will be followed by events in Nepal, Belgium, the Philippines and Spain. Further events will be announced shortly.

Read more:

[Myanmar: UN Security Council must deploy urgent mission](#) (Press Release, 25 September 2007)

[Myanmar's Political Prisoners: A Growing Legacy of Injustice](#) (Report, 16 June 2005)

Captions

Buddhist monks march in protest against military government, Yangon, Myanmar

Buddhist monk participates in AI USA protest

AI Netherlands demonstrates in the centre of Amsterdam