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U.N. Envoy Meets with Myanmar Leaders

Professor Gambari is U.N. envoy Ibrahim Gambari. He's spending the weekend in Myanmar, also known as Burma. Gambari is seeking a peaceful solution to the military government's crackdown on pro-democracy demonstrators.

Reliable news about the crackdown has been scarce. The government has kept almost all reporters out. But a broadcast network called the Democratic Voice of Burma has been getting information from inside the country. The network is based in Oslo, Norway. Its chief editor is Aye Chan Naing.

Good morning, sir.

Mr. AYE CHAN NAING (Chief Editor, Democratic Voice of Burma): Good morning.

HATTORI: Ibrahim Gambari met today with detained opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi and separately with Burmese military rulers. What do you know about those meetings?

Mr. NAING: We understand that he has met the senior general in the newly built capital. And also, he's meeting Aung San Suu Kyi. We don't know what they have really discussed but what we know is the government has been planning their own kind of demonstration and recruiting people - either by force or by paying money - to show Mr. Gambari that there are also people who support the government.

HATTORI: What are the pro-democracy protesters there telling your reporters about the state of the movement?

Mr. NAING: It is getting more, more difficult. The protesters are trying together and recruit more people to join in. But a lot more people are getting more and more scared and afraid. But a lot of student activists and some of the Buddhist monks telling to our reporter that they will still continue with this demonstration.

HATTORI: You're saying that you believe the government is actually staging protest to support the government's point of view and to impress the U.N. envoy. Are they totally not real, or are there some people who do support the government?

Mr. NAING: There are very little people who support the government. But because of the, you know, the fear and consequences if they don't do it. So lots of government servants are forced to join this kind of demonstration. But nobody would believe it. Everybody see endless of people on the streets. And that what they are writing in their own newspaper is that there were just, you know, handful of people on the streets and majority of the Burmese are supporting the government. It's a kind of a peculiar situation.

HATTORI: The information you're getting, does it leads you to believe that things are still relatively violent compared to past days or has it tapered off somewhat?

Mr. NAING: We didn't see much violence yesterday. We seen some shooting on the street yesterday but not as much as the previous days. But one disturbing news that we got a video footage of a dead body of a Buddhist monk floating on the river.

HATTORI: You're saying that there is video now showing the death of a monk. You've seen this video, and is this the first death of a monk that you're aware of?

Mr. NAING: We will (unintelligible) other death of the Buddhist monks in the past as well. But we haven't got any clear picture of it. We can see monks(ph) wrote on the body and he was badly beaten. There were lots of bruised on the body. The last few days we've seen on the video pictures that the monks were beating on the street. They were shooting into the crowds.

So, obviously, and then, again, I mean, during the night, during the curfews time, they have been raiding several different monasteries during the last three days. They imposed the curfews because they don't want anybody to come out on the streets. And then, in the cover of the darkness, they raid a lots of Buddhist monastery, beat the monks, arrested them and took them away. We don't know where hundreds of monks have been taken away and where they have been - kept them. It's a really, really serious situation.

HATTORI: Aye Chan Naing is the chief editor of the Democratic Voice of Burma, speaking with us from the network's office in Oslo, Norway. Thank you.

Mr. NAING: Thank you.