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# Rangoon warns demonstrators to leave govt offices

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Rangoon (Reuter, UPI) — Burma's hard-pressed government said yesterday it would take action against demonstrators seeking democracy unless they left government offices they have occupied.

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The announcement, the first hint of a clampdown on the mass revolt against single-party socialist rule, was broadcast on Rangoon Radio, the last media outlet still in government hands.

The warning, which the radio said had come from Prime Minister Thura U Tun Tin's office, was issued as student leaders called for mass rallies and a general strike.

Army troops remained camped on the outskirts of Rangoon, leaving security to civilian vigilantes and bracing for possible disturbances during planned nationwide protests today.

Meanwhile, a group of senior military officers yesterday branded the socialist government a "total failure".

The group of 85 retired military officers called on the armed forces to support student demands for immediate establishment of multi-party democracy.

"We admire and would put on record the outstanding courage of the young students who have fought for democracy with their blood," the officers said in a statement signed by respected former Brigadier General Aung Shwe and 84 other retired officers.

"The current country-wide demonstrations are proof enough of the peoples' rejection of the one-party system. The one-party system is a total failure."

Analysts said the old soldiers, ranging in rank from captain to general, retained influence among Burma's 170,000 man armed forces.

Student leaders warned of possible military intervention as civil adminis-

tration collapsed in Rangoon and other major cities and students and Buddhist monks took over the job of policing neighbourhoods.

A statement by the Democracy and Peace Organisation, the first political party formed in defiance of the country's one-party constitution, urged Burmese to begin choosing delegates at the village, township and state levels in order to pave the way for selection of new national leaders to replace the embattled Burma Socialist Programme Party (BSPP).

The previously strictly controlled Burmese press has been publishing opposition viewpoints in recent days as well as accounts of widespread anti-government protests.

The statement called for "speedy formation" of local delegations of one to three people from each ward or village, who will in turn elect township representatives. These will elect state and division level leaders to pick the "central group."

The newly established party is headed by former president Mahn Win Maung, 72, with the 81-year-old U Nu acting as patron.

"They appear to be trying to create a truly national political party, starting at the local level," said one Rangoon-based diplomat.

He said the new party was trying to channel the political enthusiasm of thousands of ordinary citizens who have taken to the streets to defy heavily armed troops and police and who have spontaneously organised their own neighbourhood defence groups.

Bamboo barricades blocked off many of Rangoon's main streets.

A few pro-democracy demonstrations were reported in various parts of the city, but student leaders urged supporters to maintain peace.

Students and Buddhist monks assumed police duties in Chinatown and other sections of the city.

In east Rangoon, monks dismantled signs in front of the local BSPP branch and hoisted in their place a tricolour Buddhist religious flag.

Isolated incidents of looting were reported, with thieves confining themselves actions mainly to government-run stores while leaving private businesses alone.

Several thousand demonstrators gathered outside the US Embassy yesterday morning to hear anti-government speeches.

Government offices and banks opened in the morning so civil servants and workers at state enterprises could collect

their monthly paychecks.

Student leaders said they were aiming for a shutdown of all services today. Strikes have already stopped railroads and bus traffic and shut down oil refineries at docks.

Diplomats report that civil servants would join the protest aimed at toppling the socialist regime that ruled Burma since 1948.

U Nu said yesterday that a majority of the army is not against the people.

"From reports some of my friends a lot of them (the army) are not anti-people — the majority," said U Nu.