

Phra Kittiwutho offers to aid Burma students

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DJITTABHAWAN Buddhist College director Kittiwutho Bhikkhu said yesterday he was willing to provide humanitarian aid to Burmese protesters who have fled to the Thai border.

The monk, who has reportedly helped many resistance groups from Kampuchea and Laos, declined to say if his offer included military training for Burmese students.

"I plan to meet these people at the border area in Mae Sot district next week," he said.

"If they make a request, I must respond. I want to help those who are oppressed."

The monk said he had been monitoring events in Burma in which Buddhist monks were playing a key role in protests in which more than 1,000 people have been killed.

Lamenting such bloodshed in a Buddhist country, he said:

"The monks there must be oppressed, otherwise they would not take part in the demonstrations to demand democracy and freedom."

A struggle for freedom was inevitable in an oppressed society, said Phra Kittiwutho.

"It is the duty of monks to help the people who are suffering," he said.



PHRA KITTIWUTHO...I want to help.

Meanwhile more than 200 Burmese Muslim students and teachers have arrived near Mae Sot district in Tak province, the commander of the Kawthoolei Muslim Liberation Front, Dr Abdul Razzak, said yesterday.

Dr Abdul said the Muslims, who arrived last week after eluding the military, are being housed in a Karen zone under Col Shwe Sher, commander of the Karen Sixth Brigade.

Karen National Union spokesman Dr M. Matha said the KNU had agreed to give the Muslims sanctuary and military training.

He said the Muslim students and teachers will have a chance to meet the chairman of the Mus-

lim Liberation Organisation of Burma, Col Kyaw Hla, whose base is in Karenni state, opposite Mae Hong Son province.

Col Kyaw Hla said hundreds of students and protesters are expected to head for the border in the wake of last Sunday's military crackdown in Rangoon.

The commander was concerned about food and medical supplies, which he said would be in short supply if hundreds of Burmese ask ethnic rebels for assistance.

Meanwhile, the Kachin Independence Organisation in northern Burma is prepared to provide students with military training and weapons.

KIO spokesman Col Zau Seng said yesterday about 200 students had fled to Kachin zones in Myit-kyina state, the Kachin capital, since Saw Maung's power grab.

Col Zau Seng, a close aide to KIO chairman Brang Seng, who is now in Japan, said the KIO will provide sanctuary and arm anti-government protesters.

Hundreds of Burmese from nearby Myitkyina are expected to seek Kachin assistance, he said.

"If they prefer revolutionary work in the townships after receiving military training, we will encourage them to do so and also give them weapons," said Zau Seng.

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