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Burmese monks march for freedom

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24th September, 2007

THE ARTICLE

Burmese monks march for freedom

As many as 10,000 people marched through the streets of the Burmese capital Rangoon on Sunday. They were taking part in a peaceful protest against Burma's military regime. It was the sixth day that Burma's Buddhist monks have led the protests, which are being called the saffron-robed rebellion after the colour of the robes the monks wear. Sunday's march ended at Burma's holiest site, the Shwedagon Pagoda. More than 300 nuns joined them for the first time, as well as thousands of followers from the villages surrounding Rangoon. Burma's government usually sends in its Army to stop such protests, usually brutally, and put in prison anyone voicing opposition against the regime. However, the country's leaders are unsure how to deal with protesting monks, who are highly regarded in Burma.

The protestors visited the house of Aung San Suu Kyi on Saturday. She has been held under house arrest since May 2003. The military leaders refuse to accept her election success and have done their best for many years to keep her quiet. She won The Nobel Peace Prize for her efforts in trying to bring democracy to Burma. She repeatedly smiled at the monks and said "sandu" to them – "well done" in Burmese. Eye-witnesses also report she cried with joy when they departed. The monks left carrying banners that read "Untruth will be overcome by truth," and "Injustice will be overcome by justice." Other protestors shouted slogans such as "Free Aung San Suu Kyi." No one knows which way the situation will swing, but many hope this will be Burma's final, and successful, push for freedom.

WARM-UPS

1. PROTESTS: Walk around the class and talk to other students about protests. Change partners often. After you finish, sit with your original partner(s) and share what you found out.

2. CHAT: In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words from the article are most interesting and which are most boring.

marching / protests / military regimes / holy sites / voicing opposition / monks / house arrest / election success / Nobel Peace Prize / democracy / truth / slogans

Have a chat about the topics you liked. Change topics and partners frequently.

3. QUICK ROLE PLAY: Students A are the leader of Burma's government; Students B are a protesting monk. Role play a meeting between them. After the role play, talk about your roles – do you really believe what you said?

4. PROTESTS: With your partner(s), talk about which of these issues would bring you to march in the streets:

- food price increases
- the war in Iraq
- huge spending on nuclear arms
- the banning of football
- the end of elections
- racial or religious issues
- the end of secular rule
- other _____

5. BANNERS: With your partner(s), talk about these banners. Do you agree with them?

- "Untruth will be overcome by truth"
- "Injustice will be overcome by justice"
- "Poor English will be overcome by lots of homework"
- "Terrorism will be overcome by George W. Bush"
- "Poverty will be overcome by globalization"
- "Zimbabwe's will be overcome by Zimbabwe's people"
- "Global warming will be overcome by world leaders"

6. TRUTH: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word "truth". Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

7. QUICK DEBATE: Students A think all countries will be democratic one day; Students B think not. Change partners often. After your debates, share what you talked about.

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

1. TRUE / FALSE: Look at the article's headline and guess whether these sentences are true (T) or false (F):

- | | |
|--|-------|
| a. Ten thousand monks marched through Burma's capital. | T / F |
| b. Many of the protests have been very violent. | T / F |
| c. Burma's leaders have a reputation for brutality against protestors. | T / F |
| d. The government is uncertain about how to react to the monks. | T / F |
| e. Aung San Suu Kyi has been in a Burmese prison since 2003. | T / F |
| f. Aung San Suu Kyi is a Nobel Peace Prize laureate. | T / F |
| g. Aung San Suu Kyi cried with loneliness when monks left her house. | T / F |
| h. Everyone knows the protests will result in freedom for Burma. | T / F |

2. SYNONYM MATCH: Match the following synonyms from the article:

- | | |
|----------------|------------------|
| 1. protest | a. defeated |
| 2. regime | b. handle |
| 3. surrounding | c. left |
| 4. deal | d. government |
| 5. regarded | e. imprisoned |
| 6. held | f. respect |
| 7. accept | g. demonstration |
| 8. departed | h. thought of |
| 9. overcome | i. drive |
| 10. push | j. neighbouring |

3. PHRASE MATCH: Match the following phrases from the article (sometimes more than one combination is possible):

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. taking | a. situation will swing |
| 2. Burma's Buddhist monks have | b. opposition against the regime |
| 3. called the saffron-robed | c. arrest since May 2003 |
| 4. put in prison anyone voicing | d. joy when they departed |
| 5. highly | e. rebellion |
| 6. She has been held under house | f. led the protests |
| 7. The military leaders refuse | g. by justice |
| 8. she cried with | h. regarded in Burma |
| 9. Injustice will be overcome | i. part in a peaceful protest |
| 10. No one knows which way the | j. to accept her election success |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

GAP FILL: Put the words into the gaps in the text.

Burmese monks march for freedom

As many as 10,000 people _____ through the streets of the Burmese capital Rangoon on Sunday. They were taking part in a peaceful protest against Burma's military _____. It was the sixth day that Burma's Buddhist monks have led the protests, which are being called the saffron-robed _____ after the colour of the robes the monks wear. Sunday's march ended at Burma's _____ site, the Shwedagon Pagoda. More than 300 nuns joined them for the first time, as well as thousands of followers from the villages _____ Rangoon. Burma's government usually sends in its Army to stop such _____, usually brutally, and put in prison anyone voicing opposition against the regime. However, the country's leaders are _____ how to deal with protesting monks, who are highly _____ in Burma.

The protestors visited the house of Aung San Suu Kyi on Saturday. She has been _____ under house arrest since May 2003. The military leaders _____ to accept her election success and have done their best for many years to keep her quiet. She won The Nobel Peace Prize for her _____ in trying to bring democracy to Burma. She _____ smiled at the monks and said "sandu" to them – "well done" in Burmese. Eye-witnesses also report she cried with _____ when they departed. The monks left carrying banners that read "Untruth will be _____ by truth," and "Injustice will be overcome by justice." Other protestors shouted _____ such as "Free Aung San Suu Kyi." No one knows which way the situation will swing, but many hope this will be Burma's _____, and successful, push for freedom.

unsure
holiest
regime
protests
marched
regarded
surrounding
rebellion

slogans
refuse
joy
repeatedly
final
held
efforts
overcome

LISTENING

Listen and fill in the spaces.

Burmese monks march for freedom

_____ 10,000 people marched through the streets of the Burmese capital Rangoon on Sunday. They were _____ peaceful protest against Burma's military regime. It was the sixth day that Burma's Buddhist monks _____, which are being called the saffron-robed rebellion _____ the robes the monks wear. Sunday's march ended at Burma's holiest site, the Shwedagon Pagoda. More than 300 nuns joined them _____, as well as thousands of followers from the villages surrounding Rangoon. Burma's government usually sends in its Army _____, usually brutally, and put in prison anyone voicing opposition against the regime. However, the country's leaders are unsure _____ protesting monks, who are highly regarded in Burma.

The protestors visited the house of Aung San Suu Kyi on Saturday. She has _____ arrest since May 2003. The military leaders refuse to accept her election success and have done their best for many _____. She won The Nobel Peace Prize for her efforts in trying to bring democracy to Burma. She _____ monks and said "sandu" to them – "well done" in Burmese. Eye-witnesses also report she cried with joy when they departed. The monks left carrying banners that read "Untruth will _____," and "Injustice will be overcome by justice." Other protestors shouted slogans such as "Free Aung San Suu Kyi." No one _____ situation will swing, but many hope this will be Burma's final, and successful, _____.

AFTER READING / LISTENING

1. WORD SEARCH: Look in your dictionaries / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words 'military' and 'regime'.

military	regime
-----------------	---------------

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS: Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

3. GAP FILL: In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the activity. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

4. VOCABULARY: Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

5. TEST EACH OTHER: Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall exactly how these were used in the text:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• streets• sixth• robes• surrounding• voicing• highly	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• arrest• refuse• efforts• joy• overcome• final
--	--

STUDENT PROTEST SURVEY

Write five GOOD questions about PROTESTS in the table. Do this in pairs. Each student must write the questions on his / her own paper.

When you have finished, interview other students. Write down their answers.

	STUDENT 1 _____	STUDENT 2 _____	STUDENT 3 _____
Q.1.			
Q.2.			
Q.3.			
Q.4.			
Q.5.			

- Now return to your original partner and share and talk about what you found out. Change partners often.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

DISCUSSION

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a) What did you think when you read the headline?
- b) What do you know about Burma?
- c) Do you prefer the country to be known as Burma or Myanmar?
- d) Have you ever been or would you ever go on a protest march?
- e) Has there ever been a rebellion in your country?
- f) What do you think of the protesting monks?
- g) What other governments in the world use brutality to hold on to power? What do you think of these countries?
- h) What do you think of the name "the saffron-robed rebellion"?
- i) What opposition to your government would you like to voice?
- j) Do religious followers in your country take part in political protests?



STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a) Did you like reading this article?
- b) What do you know about Aung San Suu Kyi?
- c) Do you think democracy always wins when people keep fighting for it?
- d) Do you think democracy is worth physically fighting for?
- e) Why do you think Burma's military regime is so afraid of Aung San Suu Kyi?
- f) Do you think the monks of the saffron-robed rebellion should also get the Nobel Peace Prize?
- g) Do you think justice will always overcome injustice?
- h) Do you think the monks' protests will win democracy for Burma?
- i) What questions would you like to ask Burma's military rulers?
- j) Did you like this discussion?

AFTER DISCUSSION: Join another partner / group and tell them what you talked about.

- a) What was the most interesting thing you heard?
- b) Was there a question you didn't like?
- c) Was there something you totally disagreed with?
- d) What did you like talking about?
- e) Which was the most difficult question?

LANGUAGE

CORRECT WORD: Put the correct words from a–d below in the article.

Burmese monks march for freedom

As many as 10,000 people marched through the streets of the Burmese capital Rangoon on Sunday. They were taking (1) _____ in a peaceful protest against Burma's military regime. It was the sixth day that Burma's Buddhist monks have (2) _____ the protests, which are being called the saffron-robed rebellion (3) _____ the colour of the robes the monks wear. Sunday's march ended at Burma's holiest site, the Shwedagon Pagoda. More than 300 nuns joined them for the first time, as well as thousands of (4) _____ from the villages surrounding Rangoon. Burma's government usually sends in its Army to stop such protests, usually (5) _____, and put in prison anyone voicing opposition against the regime. However, the country's leaders are unsure how to (6) _____ with protesting monks, who are highly regarded in Burma.

The protestors visited the house of Aung San Suu Kyi on Saturday. She has been held (7) _____ house arrest since May 2003. The military leaders refuse to accept her election success and have done their best for many years to keep her (8) _____. She won The Nobel Peace Prize for her (9) _____ in trying to bring democracy to Burma. She repeatedly smiled at the monks and said "sandu" to them – "well done" in Burmese. Eye-witnesses also report she cried (10) _____ joy when they departed. The monks left carrying banners that read "Untruth will be overcome by truth," and "Injustice will be overcome by justice." Other protestors shouted slogans (11) _____ as "Free Aung San Suu Kyi." No one knows which way the situation will swing, but many hope this will be Burma's (12) _____, and successful, push for freedom.

- | | | | | |
|-----|-------------|----------------|---------------|-----------------|
| 1. | (a) apart | (b) part | (c) party | (d) partner |
| 2. | (a) lead | (b) leaved | (c) led | (d) leading |
| 3. | (a) after | (b) before | (c) following | (d) later |
| 4. | (a) fellows | (b) follows | (c) following | (d) followers |
| 5. | (a) brute | (b) brutality | (c) brutally | (d) brute force |
| 6. | (a) deal | (b) peal | (c) seal | (d) veal |
| 7. | (a) over | (b) under | (c) before | (d) after |
| 8. | (a) quilt | (b) quit | (c) quite | (d) quiet |
| 9. | (a) efforts | (b) effortless | (c) effects | (d) effective |
| 10. | (a) for | (b) by | (c) with | (d) tears |
| 11. | (a) so | (b) such | (c) many | (d) well |
| 12. | (a) final | (b) finale | (c) finality | (d) finals |

HOMEWORK

1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION: Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

2. INTERNET: Search the Internet and find more information about Aung San Suu Kyi and Burma's military regime. Talk about what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

3. MILITARY REGIMES: Make a poster showing the different military regimes around the world. Which ones are worst? Show your poster to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all find out similar things?

4. MAGAZINE ARTICLE: Write a magazine article about the protesting monks and the impact they might have in Burma. Include imaginary interviews with a monk, a military leader and an average Burmese person.

Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Which article was best and why?

5. LETTER: Write a letter to the leaders of Burma's military regime. Ask them three questions about why Aung San Suu Kyi has been under house arrest for over four years and why they are afraid of democracy. Give them three pieces of advice on what to do next and why. Read your letter to your partner(s) in your next lesson. Your partner(s) will answer your questions.

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

a. F b. F c. T d. T e. F f. T g. F h. F

SYNONYM MATCH:

- | | |
|----------------|------------------|
| 1. protest | a. demonstration |
| 2. regime | b. government |
| 3. surrounding | c. neighbouring |
| 4. deal | d. handle |
| 5. regarded | e. thought of |
| 6. held | f. imprisoned |
| 7. accept | g. respect |
| 8. departed | h. left |
| 9. overcome | i. defeated |
| 10. push | j. drive |

PHRASE MATCH:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. taking | a. part in a peaceful protest |
| 2. Burma's Buddhist monks have | b. led the protests |
| 3. called the saffron-robed | c. rebellion |
| 4. put in prison anyone voicing | d. opposition against the regime |
| 5. highly | e. regarded in Burma |
| 6. She has been held under house | f. arrest since May 2003 |
| 7. The military leaders refuse | g. to accept her election success |
| 8. she cried with | h. joy when they departed |
| 9. Injustice will be overcome | i. by justice |
| 10. No one knows which way the | j. situation will swing |

GAP FILL:

Burmese monks march for freedom

As many as 10,000 people **marched** through the streets of the Burmese capital Rangoon on Sunday. They were taking part in a peaceful protest against Burma's military **regime**. It was the sixth day that Burma's Buddhist monks have led the protests, which are being called the saffron-robed **rebellion** after the colour of the robes the monks wear. Sunday's march ended at Burma's **holiest** site, the Shwedagon Pagoda. More than 300 nuns joined them for the first time, as well as thousands of followers from the villages **surrounding** Rangoon. Burma's government usually sends in its Army to stop such **protests**, usually brutally, and put in prison anyone voicing opposition against the regime. However, the country's leaders are **unsure** how to deal with protesting monks, who are highly **regarded** in Burma.

The protestors visited the house of Aung San Suu Kyi on Saturday. She has been **held** under house arrest since May 2003. The military leaders **refuse** to accept her election success and have done their best for many years to keep her quiet. She won The Nobel Peace Prize for her **efforts** in trying to bring democracy to Burma. She **repeatedly** smiled at the monks and said "sandu" to them – "well done" in Burmese. Eye-witnesses also report she cried with **joy** when they departed. The monks left carrying banners that read "Untruth will be **overcome** by truth," and "Injustice will be overcome by justice." Other protestors shouted **slogans** such as "Free Aung San Suu Kyi." No one knows which way the situation will swing, but many hope this will be Burma's **final**, and successful, push for freedom.

LANGUAGE WORK

1 - b 2 - c 3 - a 4 - d 5 - c 6 - a 7 - b 8 - d 9 - d 10 - c 11 - b 12 - a