



Myanmar security forces kill 18 protesters

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Myanmar security forces opened fire on protests against military rule on Wednesday, killing at least 18 people, a human rights group said, a day after neighboring countries called for restraint and offered to help Myanmar resolve the crisis.

1. Wearing yellow and white construction helmets, some holding home-made shields of wood, others with a satellite dish, Myanmar's protests against the military coup showed no sign of letting up on Wednesday.
2. Security forces fired rubber bullets, stun grenades and tear gas to break them up and local media reported several people were hurt.
3. Later, there were reports of live ammunition fired and at least 18 people were killed.
4. It comes a day after the Association of Southeast Asian Nations urged restraint but they failed to unite behind a call for the military to release ousted government leader Aung San Suu Kyi and restore democracy.
5. Meanwhile inside the country, a prominent activist called for sanctions on businesses linked to the military.
6. Across the nation on Wednesday, nine people were hurt and at least two people were killed when police fired rubber bullets in the second largest city Mandalay, that's according to the Myanmar Now news agency.
7. In Yangon, hundreds of people were detained including several protest leaders, an activist said.
8. As well as local media reports of shooting and deaths in the central towns of Myingyan and Magway.
9. Media also reported five people were wounded in the town of Monywa.

10. The military has justified the coup, saying its complaints of voter fraud in the Nov. 8 elections were ignored.

11. Nearly 1,300 people have been detained, according to activists, including six journalists in Yangon.