
HUNDREDS PROTEST IN ARMENIA AFTER PM IGNORES DEADLINE TO RESIGN

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Opposition demonstrators have blocked the streets of Armenias capital to mark the start of a protest campaign after Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan ignored their call to step down over a ceasefire deal struck with Azerbaijan.

Chanting Nikol, traitor, and Armenia without Nikol, hundreds filled the streets of Yerevan, answering an opposition call to protest after Pashinyan ignored a deadline of midday Tuesday set by the opposition for him to quit.

Pashinyan, who swept to power in a peaceful revolution in May 2018, accepted a Russian-brokered ceasefire deal last month to end a bloody conflict between Azerbaijan and ethnic Armenian forces over the Nagorno-Karabakh region and surrounding areas.

Pashinyans opponents want him out over what they say was his disastrous handling of the six-week conflict that handed Azerbaijan territorial gains.

Pashinyan has accepted responsibility for the conflicts outcome but said he is now responsible for ensuring national security and stabilising the ex-Soviet republic of approximately three million people.

Ishkhan Saghatelyan, an opposition politician for the Armenian Revolutionary Federation party, announced the start of coordinated civil disobedience in a televised address on Tuesday after the deadline passed.

Nikol, you will go anyway. Leave peacefully, he said.

From now until 17:00 Armenias citizens are justified in using their right to peaceful actions of disobedience to express their demand and to make it heard, he said.

The opposition has said it plans to block streets nationwide and to paralyse the national transport network if needed.

Armenian spiritual leader Karekin II said in a statement that he had met Pashinyan and urged him to resign.

Pashinyan did not comment on the protests publicly on Tuesday.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/12/8/hundreds-protest-in-armenia-after-pm-ignores-deadline-to-resign>

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