

Update: Providence protesters target Syrian killings / pic

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Providence

Journal photo / Donita Naylor

About two dozen people chanted "Free Syria" and "Stop the killings," and waved flags to commuters stopped at the lights at Francis and Gaspee Streets outside the State House in Providence Friday afternoon.

By [Donita Naylor](#)

Journal staff writer

PROVIDENCE, R.I. -- Protesters waving Syrian flags, or draped in them, chanted "Free Syria" and "Stop the killings" to cars stopped at lights Friday afternoon [at Francis and Gaspee Streets.](#)

As the lights changed and traffic moved, the protesters waved and said "Thank you!" -- especially to drivers who honked.

News outlets reported the government had killed dozens Friday in Syria as protests there against the regime of Bashar al-Assad intensified.

Mohamed Abdelrahman, 63, of Warwick, wore a Rhode Island Council for Muslim Advancement shirt that said "Making a Difference Together!" and held a sign that

said "Freedom; We will get; We paid the price." He said the price was 500 dead so far, as the government has shot at protesters.

Mohamed Mourad, 30, of Pawtucket, a doctor doing a residency at the VA Hospital in Providence, said protesters in Syria are shot in the head and the neck.

"They're just asking for freedom," he said.

His colleague, Abdullah Shahin, 28, also of Pawtucket and also doing a residency at the VA Hospital, held a sign that said, "Bashar! Killing Children is Not Reform."

He said Bashar is the ruler's first name, and it means lucky charm, or one who has good news. "He's not good news for Syria," Shahin said.

A Greenville dentist, Hasan Alsawaf, 41, outlined the group's objectives.

"We want to stop the massacre of innocent woman and children," he said. "We want freedom for the Syrian people. We want democracy. We don't want corruption. We want freedom, dignity and equal rights."

He stood among the small crowd that was making a big noise.

"You know, nobody's shooting at us," he continued. "We're very proud to be standing here. We love this country. We get spoiled for living in this country."

He also called for a U.N. inquiry into the welfare of the women and children in Daraa, which has been under seige for three days, with no food, water or electricity.

Mohamad Abdulaziz, 35, of Boston, said Syrian-Americans protested two weeks ago at the Syrian Embassy in Washington. Every Friday, he said, they protest at the U.N., and every Saturday at the White House. He announced a Boston protest in Copley Square for Saturday.

Abdul Alnahas, 33, of Cranston, who said he has been in the United States for 17 yaers, said the regime is robbing the country by requiring businesses to partner with a member of the ruling family.

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