

President ousted in Kyrgyzstan

April 2010



The situation

On 6 April 2010, violent clashes broke out between security personnel and opposition protesters in the capital, Bishkek, and in the towns of Naryn and Talas and in the Chuiskaya region. Kyrgyzstan's opposition accused President Kurmanbek Bakiyev's administration of corruption, as well as for curtailing freedom of speech and causing a countrywide energy crisis. The clashes resulted in Bakiyev fleeing the capital and an interim government was subsequently established in Kyrgyzstan under the leadership of Roza Otunbayeva. The two days of violent unrest left at least 85 people dead and more than 1,500 others injured.



...Several people have been killed in clashes between anti-government protesters and police in the capital, Bishkek. The protesters reportedly seized weapons and ammunition from local security officers and were attempting to gain access to government buildings when they were confronted by local security personnel. Similar anti-government protests have also been reported in the cities of Talas and Naryn. Travellers in all the aforementioned areas are advised to maintain a low profile and avoid all related protests and gatherings due to the possibility of further violence...

Case study

A group of Oxford University medical students in Kyrgyzstan called red24 during this increasingly tense period. On 7 April 2010, authorities declared a state of emergency and imposed a night-time curfew in the capital of Bishkek and cities of Naryn and Talas, as well as the region of Chuiskaya, which made the students concerned about their safety.

Remote assistance

red24 contacted the students with situational updates every four hours. In the meantime, red24's security team planned a detailed evacuation plan and placed the in-country consultants on standby should a rescue be necessary.



...Authorities have declared a state of emergency in Bishkek, Chuiskaya, Naryn and Talas as violent confrontations between police and anti-government protesters continue. A night-time curfew will reportedly be imposed from 22:00 to 06:00 local time to quell any further unrest. Anti-government rallies are also being reported in Tokmok and Osh but there have been no immediate reports of violence. Since 6 April, ongoing clashes between police and protesters have reportedly claimed the lives of at least 12 people and left scores of

others wounded. Travellers are advised to maintain a low profile, adhere to the curfew conditions and avoid all related protests and demonstrations...

After the curfew was imposed, red24 made contact with the students the next day, as the situation in Bishkek had deteriorated further. The students then requested to leave as soon as possible. red24's risk analyst for the region confirmed that the roads were still safe for travel, that no roadblocks or checkpoints had been erected and that the Bishkek airport was open and running normal operations.

Travel tracking

red24's customer services team promptly arranged flights from Bishkek to Istanbul for two of the students and a connecting flight from Istanbul to India for the other student who did not meet the visa criteria for Istanbul.

red24 travel tracked the three students from their guest house, where they stayed overnight, to the airport, which they travelled to in the morning. Regular safety calls were made to the students throughout the night.

Upon arrival in Istanbul, red24 confirmed that two of the medical students had arrived safely in Istanbul and followed up with the remaining student upon her arrival in Mumbai.

All of the students thanked red24 for their thorough support and regular calls.

red24 provided the following advice:

- Maintain a low public profile and limit travel outdoors, particularly if in the cities or towns that have been worst affected by the recent unrest.
- Avoid travel after dark.
- Register your presence in the country with your embassy or consulate.
- Avoid all large gatherings as the potential for further violent civil unrest is high. Do not approach crowds/mobs/individuals engaged in looting.
- Expect both official and unofficial checkpoints on major roads and in major cities. In this regard, ensure that you have positive identification on your person at all times, preferably a certified copy of your passport.
- Avoid unnecessary travel near government buildings and security force installations and personnel.