

Guidelines On Covering Protests and Unrests

a. Preparing for and Assessing the Situation

1. Know the relevant laws and regulations;
2. Understand the risks involved and always put safety first;
3. Gather information and be fully prepared for the situation before arriving at the location;
4. Make sure that arrangements have been made for quick and easy communication with your station;
5. Carry a bottle of water to reduce the effect of tear gas and pepper spray. Should you expect such a situation, do not wear contact lenses;
6. Avoid using headbands, flags, caps and other gear used to represent the protestors;
7. Wear a press jacket for easy identification;
8. When wearing a protective jacket, make sure it can be clearly distinguished from the ones used by security forces.
9. Wear comfortable sneakers and carry backpacks;
10. Familiarize yourself with security operations in such situations;

b. Important Precautions for Safety and Protection

1. Get contact information of a focal point at police in case necessity arise for emergency contact;
2. Consider your health and wellbeing when preparing for the situation;
3. Do not conduct yourself in the same manner as the protestors;
4. Do not place yourself between the security line and protestors;
5. Move within the designated security zones and in a manner which would not obstruct the duties of security forces. Realize that failing to do so would be at your own risk;
6. Accredited press cards or other media identifications should be clearly displayed.
7. Depending on the situation, should you decide not to display press/identification

card for your own security, be ready to produce these on request of security personnel;

c. Escalating Situation

1. If injured or hurt, seek prompt medical assistance;
2. If situation escalates, quickly inform the station;
3. Keep a safe distance from protestors who may turn aggressive;
4. Plan ahead for a safe exit;
5. In times of danger, seek help of other journalists, extend your support to them even if they are from rival stations;
6. Never pick projectiles thrown by protestors, lest they are be potentially dangerous;
7. Beware of protestors who might try to use your microphone and camera for their gain;
8. Refrain from disclosing information that could possibly put you at risk or aggravate the situation;
9. Do not challenge security forces or address protestors in a manner which deviates from journalistic ethics; Refrain from personal prejudice;
10. Never make religious/racist slurs or defamatory remarks against a particular group, political party or an institution. Similarly, don't allow protestors the opportunity to do so;

d. Arrest or Detention

1. Be professional in your conduct rather than challenge security forces;
2. In the event of arrest or detention, seek permission to call and inform your editor or a senior official of the station.

Note: This is the translation of the Guideline published in the Government Gazette on 20 May 2013