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## **Brazil protesters storm foreign ministry**

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Protesters in Brazil have stormed the foreign ministry after government concessions failed to quench their anger.

Some 800,000 people took to the streets in major cities in Brazil on Thursday with tens of thousands marching around the buildings of the Congress, the Supreme Court, and the presidential offices in the capital Brasilia.

The largest demonstration was held in Rio de Janeiro where some 300,000 marched near the Candelaria Church and the city hall. In Sao Paolo, at least 110,000 protesters took to the streets.

In the northeastern city of Salvador, police fired tear gas and rubber bullets to disperse the protesters who tried to break through a police barrier near a stadium prior to a Confederations Cup match between Nigeria and Uruguay.

The protests, which erupted more than two weeks ago over transport fare hikes from 3 to 3.20 reais (\$1.38 to \$1.47), continued on Thursday, a day after the government reversed the increase in bus and subway fares. The protesters have now broadened their demands to include high taxes, inflation, corruption, and poor public services.

Nearly 10 years of economic prosperity in Brazil is taking a downturn. Economic growth was at less than one percent in 2012 while annual inflation stood at 6.5 percent in the same year.

The protesters are also angry at more than \$26 billion of public money that will be spent on the two major sporting events, the 2014 World Cup and 2016 Olympics, slated to be held in Latin America's largest country.

As protests continue unabated, President Dilma Rousseff has called off a planned trip to Japan next week.

Rousseff had on Monday tried to calm the protesters, saying their message "for more citizenship, better schools, better hospitals, better health, for direct participation," was being heard.