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Assad Releases Protesters as Massive Friday Protests Loom

Posted By Jason Ditz

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Syrian President Bashar Assad [today released hundreds](#) of detainees who were involve in anti-regime protests over the past several weeks. The move, coupled with a [new cabinet](#) announcement, was aimed to placate a protest movement that has soared in size.



The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights [says that a number](#) of the released detainees reported torture and had injuries that were consistent with harsh mistreatment while in custody.

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The protest movement has declared Friday the “Day of Victory,” and with every Friday protest being dramatically larger than the previous one, it should indeed be a massive series of demonstrations indeed.

Large numbers of protesters have been [killed or wounded in the demonstrations](#), which began in the tiny southern city of Daraa. The Assad government, as with others before them, don’t seem to have a good answer to demands for massive reforms, and are trying to placate the protesters with a combination of cabinet shuffles and fear. The recent track record for these is not good, and this is likely to be a long-term issue for the regime.