

Mexican Lawmakers Say Government Seeking Cover-up in Oaxaca Massacre



Mexico, August 15 (RHC/TELESUR)--More than two months since police left ten demonstrators dead in Oaxaca, officials still don't know who gave police the order to fire.

Lawmakers from Mexico's leftist parties have accused the Office of the Attorney General of trying to perpetuate impunity in the deaths of several people at the hands of police in the town of Nochixtlan, Oaxaca.

Representatives from the Office of the Attorney General, known as the PGR, participated in press conference Thursday where they provided an update on the progress of the investigation into the events of June 19.

Officials seemed to be more interested in outlining the alleged misdeeds of the residents of Nochixtlan, specifying the an investigation into a series of crimes was already open before the massacre took place. They also went to great lengths to emphasize the alleged presence of weapons in the hands of the civilians in Nochixtlan.

“A relevant fact is that the PGR confirmed that there were civilians carrying weapons and a Federal Police helicopter was damaged by these weapons and a second was damaged by impact of rockets,” said conservative Senator Mariana Gomez del Campo, who also participated in the press conference. She added that over hundred police officers had apparently suffered injuries.

No police were killed, meanwhile at least ten civilians were killed in different clashes throughout Oaxaca on June 19, six alone were killed in Nochixtlan.

During that press conference, Deputy Attorney General Gilberto Higuera Bernal, the government official tasked with the case, further claimed that investigators from the PGR had been unable to enter the town of Nochixtlan.

Senator Alejandro Encinas, from the center-left PRD, grilled Higuera on this point during Friday's session of the special commission of the Mexican Congress following up on the incident.

Encinas said Roberto Campa, the undersecretary for Human Rights from the Interior Ministry, had no problem entering the town in order to interview witnesses and had done so several times.

“Campa went in, talked with the victims, with the authorities ... he has assembled the facts ... the PGR cannot pretend it has dementia, because it has the elements it needs to go further in the investigation,” said Encinas, as quoted by La Jornada.

In addition, a consortium of human rights organizations were even able to produce a preliminary report, based on interviews with the town's residents, detailing the human rights abuses committed by the state in Nochixtlan.

Encinas also questioned how the PGR could claim civilians were armed without offering proof. Meanwhile, Virgilio Caballero, a lawmaker from the leftist Morena party, said he repeatedly asked federal Attorney General Arely Gomez who gave the order for police to fire. Despite nearly two months since the massacre took place, Gomez could not provide him with an answer.

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