

Chilean women protesters come under attack from fascist groups



Santiago de Chile, July 26 (RHC)-- On Thursday, thousands remained in the streets of Santiago, Valparaiso and other Chilean cities in order to participate in the "March for an Unrestricted, Safe and Free of Charge Abortion," a nationwide initiative which was the target of misogynistic attacks that unleashed strong protests.

"The march was overshadowed by two situations. One was a counter demonstration aimed at disqualifying women's legitimate rights and the other was a very serious fact: three women were attacked by hooded people," Camila Maturana, a lawyer from Humanas Corporation said, adding that "this misogynous violence we have not seen in other social rallies before."

Convened by the "Feminists on the Fight" coordinator, the March was carried out on the International Day of Black Latin American Women. In Santiago, the capital of the country, the march took place without incidents until it reached the Palacio de La Moneda, the seat of President Sebastian Piñera's administration.

"About 15 thousand people mobilized in Santiago... The call was also against racism towards indigenous and migrant women that is disseminated by the State itself and the Piñera administration, which drives mass expulsions to migrants," La Izquierda Diario reported.

"We are marching against racism and free abortion. Abort racism." While the march moved across the streets of Santiago, three women were stabbed by militants of far-right organizations. Then, a group of women, among whom was the former presidential candidate Beatriz Sanchez, improvised a rally on the Baquedano Square, a place where they were not supposedly authorized to be, according to the Military Police.

Later, the Chilean security forces proceeded to crack down on demonstrators and deployed its water cannon truck to clear barricades that had been erected on the Providencia Avenue. Five men and two women were arrested.

"The government announced that it will file a complaint against those who are responsible for the stabbings," local media MundoBip report on Tuesday night, adding that feminist activists accused the Piñera administration of "acting negligent" and not confronting Chilean fascist organizations.

"We reject the Government has acted so late. What happened at the March is not only an incitement to hatred, it is gender violence," said the former president of the Chilean Socialist Youth, Nicole Cardoch Ramos.

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