

# *21 social leaders murdered in Colombia so far this year*

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**Political violence has claimed 21 social leaders in Colombia so far this year. | Photo: Twitter: Indepaz**

Bogotá, February 5 (RHC)-- Political violence continues to soar in Colombia, in a context in which every day brings new selective murders, massacres and the discovery of mass graves. The death of a former councilman on Tuesday in the department of Tolima confirms the trend.

Ovidio de Jesús Salazar Valencia, former councilman of the municipality of Herveo (250 km northwest of Bogotá) was killed after being attacked with a firearm in a rural area of the town, according to information

confirmed by the Tolima Departmental Police.

The murder, confirmed Thursday by Indepaz, took place around 22H00 (02H00 UTC Wednesday) Tuesday in the Damas Bajas village, when the body of the 50-year-old former councilman was found.

According to the authorities' version, the victim had two bullet impacts and died at the scene. A special team of the Judicial Police is carrying out the investigations.

Meanwhile, the Mayor's Office of Herveo through its social networks regretted the death of Salazar and expressed condolences to the family. Mayor Arberis Rojas Rubio said: "Man with great power of leadership and vision. A man who loved tourism and with great ideals. He was a man who left the city to focus his business on his homeland."

Indepaz, the organization that keeps the record of political violence in the South American country, confirms that Salazar's is the 21st murder so far in 2021, in a count that totals more than 1,137 since the signing of the peace agreements in 2016 between the Colombian State and the then FARC-EP rebels.

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