

Repression by the Colombian police intensifies in Cali



During on-going protests against the neoliberal policies of the Colombian government, the NGO Temblores reported 2,095 cases of police abuse. | Photo: Twitter @descifraguerra

Bogota, May 24 (RHC)-- The Calipso sector in the east of Cali, capital of the southern department of Valle del Cauca, became a battlefield when public security forces clashed with protesters from Saturday afternoon until early Sunday morning, as part of the National Strike that is now in its 26th day.

After the specific complaint that the facilities of the Éxito store in Calipso were used as a torture and murder center against protesters, the human rights situation is increasingly complex in the Julio Rincón

neighborhood.

Since 03:00 hours on Saturday, May 22nd, the Julio Rincón neighborhood was surrounded by a large number of police officers, who cordoned off all the blocks and forced the entire population to lock themselves in their homes. The police action generated a strong confrontation with the youths of the so-called "front line", who with stones and sticks confronted the armed forces who were firing firearms, stun bombs and tear gas.

Everything exploded when the police prevented the entrance of human rights commissions to the Éxito de Calipso warehouse where -- according to eyewitnesses -- floors and clothes of the place remained with traces of blood, in spite of erasing them by scrubbing the floors.

The version has been rejected by the local authorities, who assured that they entered the warehouse and did not verify any of the allegations.

In the midst of the repeated scenes of violence and repression experienced in several neighborhoods of Cali since the national strike took shape, the organized communities denounce the disappearance of 558 people.

Neighbors of the area also reported sounds of gunshots, detonations and the overflight of a police helicopter during the night.

During the course of the night, the disturbances continued, while the demonstrators denounced the actions of the police.

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