

Protests against mining project continue in Panama



Panama City, November 21 (RHC)-- Panamanians continue to protest against Law 406, which grants Minera Panama permission to exploit an open-pit copper mine for 20 years.

This law allows the subsidiary of the Canadian company First Quantum Minerals to exploit the largest open-pit copper mine in Central America, with a contract that provides the opportunity to operate until the end of the mine's lifespan.

The Supreme Justice Court (CSJ) is expected to rule on ten lawsuits challenging the constitutionality of Law 406. The deadline for arguments for two lawsuits expires on Tuesday and Wednesday.

Over the past month, protesters have expressed their dissent through various actions, including the closure of streets and roads. The National Police reported that 1,157 people have been arrested so far, 151 of whom are minors.

According to the police, 63 commercial establishments and 19 institutions, mostly government offices, have been affected during this period. Additionally, 28 surveillance cameras, metro stations, and ATMs, as well as five police stations, have been vandalized.

The primary reason for these protests is the location of the mine in a biological sanctuary, serving as a connection to the Mesoamerican Biological Corridor, which facilitates the transit of animals such as pumas, ocelots, and various bird species from Panama to Mexico.

In addition to concerns about the environmental impact, suspicions have arisen due to the swift approval by President Laurentino Cortizo, who ratified the mining company's agreement with his signature in just three days.

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