

Peruvian Protester Killed During Rally Against Mining Project



Lima, April 23 (teleSUR-RHC)-- Peruvian officials reported that one person was killed and 11 wounded during clashes on Wednesday between security agents and opponents of Southern Copper Corp's Tia Maria project.

The victim, identified as 61-year-old Victoriano Huayta, died in hospital in the town of Mollendo after receiving several bullet fragments in the leg. The events took place in the southern region of *Arequipa* while demonstrators attempted to block two bridges in protest of a \$1.4 billion mine project.

According to protesters, including export-producing farmers, the mine pollutes nearby valleys currently involved in agricultural production. The Tia Maria mining project has been stalled since 2011, after three protesters died in similar rallies.

With this project, the U.S.-based Southern Copper expects to increase its annual output by 120,000 tons. However over the past month, protests staged by unions, university students and local political groups have threatened the ambitious project. The mining company, which 75.1 percent is owned by Mexican mining conglomerate *Grupo México*, has said it will continue to work toward bringing Tia Maria to fruition despite the protests.

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