

Mexican Mid-term Elections Marked by Death and Chaos



Mexico City, June 8 (teleSUR-RHC)-- Disaster and death marked Sunday's mid-term elections in Mexico, after protesters and activists boycotted the polls and protested against the electoral process.

The National Electoral Institute (INE) claimed Sunday, before releasing the first official results, that the elections had developed peacefully and 'positively' despite violent incidents.

"Considering the challenges we faced (...) the result is definitely positive for our society and for the National Electoral Institute," said Lorenzo Cordova, head of INE.

INE officials claimed that violent incidents were isolated, and happened only in the states of Oaxaca, Chiapas and Guerrero. However, deaths, arrests and violence were also registered in the states of Puebla, Yucatan, Chihuahua and Michoacan. In total, 415 voting stations had to be closed due to disruptions and violence.

Ahead of the polls, at least 16 people had been killed in election-related incidents, according to Reuters. The total of people killed on Sunday is still unknown. In Oaxaca and Guerrero, the Mexican army intervened, sending troops and helicopters to patrol the cities. Reports of activists being shot by police officers and clashes with pro-government militants included a former mayor being shot dead outside a polling station in Oaxaca.

After polls had closed in Guerrero, Federal Police forces killed at least one person while trying to rescue 35 policemen being held by activists. The protesters were proposing freeing the policemen in exchange for the release of arrested teachers.

In Yucatan, two people were killed and the headquarters of the governing PRI party was burnt. In Puebla a PRI local leader was also killed. In Oaxaca, over 120 people were arrested due to a boycott campaign launched by activists and the family of the 43 missing Ayotzinapa students.

Months before the elections they had denounced the conditions would not allow a fair and transparent election, given evidence of links between organized crime and local governments. Teachers and activists burnt ballot boxes throughout the state to protest.

Chiapas was also tense, and at least 10 people were arrested in relation to protests and voting disruptions. In Mexico City, a local government worker was arrested for assisting people to fraudulently vote multiple times, meanwhile in the state of Sonora, a local PRI senior adviser was arrested for buying votes outside polling stations.

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