

Yellow Vest protests in France reach 11-month mark



Paris, October 13 (RHC)-- France's Yellow Vests have marched for 48th consecutive weekend around the country. The past 11 months have been filled with violent repression, mass arrests and what many say is a media campaign orchestrated against them.

Despite all the efforts to discredit them and to confuse Black Bloc anarchists with the Yellow Vests, recent polls show that half the country still supports the movement. However, bans on peaceful protests, steep fines and the threat of police brutality continue to intimidate many from showing up each Saturday.

While the number of protesters in Paris has been down over the last month, each Saturday one city in France is chosen as the focal point of the Yellow Vests. Thousands and thousands of people always turn up to march there, as they did this week in the southwestern city of Toulouse.

On Saturday, police in Toulouse deployed tear gas and water cannon as Yellow Vest protesters took to the streets. The city in the south of France has routinely been the scene of large anti-government rallies for the political movement which is nearing its first birthday.

It again saw large crowds gather on Saturday and tensions soon boiled over with police clamping down heavily by using tear gas and water cannon to disperse the gathering. Demonstrators erected barricades to inhibit the movement of security forces and the makeshift impediments were soon set on fire.

The Yellow Vest demonstrations began last November as a protest against a planned fuel tax hike, which was set to be introduced by the government of President Emmanuel Macron. The protests were successful in getting Macron to scrap the mooted tax but the movement has since evolved into a wider display of anger at the government's policies.

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