Police violence in Cali leaves at least one dead and 20 injured

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ESMAD agents attack protesters in the Colombian city of Cali. | Photo: EFE

Cali, June 18 (RHC)-- At least one dead, 20 injured and eight arrested was the preliminary balance of Thursday's repression by the Mobile Anti-Riot Squad (ESMAD) against protesters in the Colombian city of Cali.

Citizens denounced through social networks that a young man died in the Paso del Comercio sector after being shot in the head during the repression of the ESMAD and the police of the city.

The death of the young man adds to the figures provided by the Instituto de Estudios para el Desarrollo y la Paz (Indepaz) which counts at least 70 deaths due to the actions of the Esmad since the beginning of the demonstrations against President Iván Duque.

On Thursday night, while the Copa América match between Colombia and Venezuela was being played, the Esmad once again attacked demonstrators in the south of the Colombian capital Bogotá.

The city of Neiva, capital of the department of Huila, also witnessed the action of the security forces against demonstrators.

Thursday's marches in several Colombian cities were called by sectors that are not represented by the National Strike Committee, which announced on Tuesday a "temporary interruption of the mobilizations."

On April 28, a wave of mobilizations began in Colombia, joined by different social sectors and union, student and political organizations, which have been marked by denunciations of the "excessive use of force" by security agents.

The European Union (EU) special envoy for peace in Colombia, Eamon Gilmore, expressed on Thursday to President Iván Duque his concern about the death of demonstrators during the protests.

"I spoke to the president about the concern we have in Europe about the death of protesters and to me the president reiterated his commitment to ensure that there is accountability," Gilmore said in a joint statement with Duque after a meeting.

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