

*Texas governor reportedly  
ordered soldiers to turn migrants  
back to river and refuse to give  
them water*

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Austin, July 19 (RHC)-- In the U.S., claims by a Texas state trooper that superiors ordered officers at the border in Eagle Pass to push undocumented immigrants back into the Rio Grande and deny them water were denied by Greg Abbot, the Republican governor of Texas, in a statement. But one observer recalled that not that long ago, U.S. Border Patrol agents on horseback used unnecessary force when they aggressively dispersed and whipped Haitian migrants seeking asylum.

"No orders or instructions have been issued under Operation Lone Star that would endanger the lives of those attempting to cross the border illegally," reads the statement released by Abbott's office. The release states that "Texas is deploying all tools and strategies to deter and repel illegal crossings between

ports of entry. The absence of these tools and strategies, including barbed wire snagging on clothing, encourages migrants to make illegal and potentially deadly crossings."

The claims that migrants were being pushed into the river already caused a state investigation to begin as well, according to a Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) report cited in the Texas Tribune.

The police officer who made the report of abuse with immigrants at the border also reported that the barbed wire deployed by the soldiers has injured people, including a woman who had a miscarriage while entangled in the wire.

Travis Considine, a DPS spokesman, said in an email that the Office of Inspector General, which investigates allegations of misconduct by state employees, "is looking into the allegations made in the email in question."

"There is no directive or policy instructing troopers to withhold water from migrants or push them back into the river," said Considine, who also stressed in a statement on Twitter that troopers give migrants water, tend to their injuries and do what they can to keep them from risking their lives.

Meanwhile, repudiation of alleged cruelty against immigrants spreads. The White House, politicians and civilian groups on Tuesday repudiated the Texas government's border policy in response to news reports that police officers in that state were ordered to deny water to migrants and to return even children and babies to the waters of the Rio Grande River on the border with Mexico.

"We saw those reports. Clearly, if true, it's abhorrent, it's despicable, it's dangerous. And we're talking about the core values of who we are as a country," White House spokeswoman Karine Jean-Pierre told a news conference.

Domingo Garcia, president of the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), denounced the inhumane treatment and the use of barbed wire, buoys and other barriers at the Texas border "that endanger the safety of women and children seeking asylum."

For his part, Democratic Congressman Joaquin Castro said in an interview that Secretary of State Antony Blinken told him that the administration is reviewing the situation and stressed that he discussed the "barbarism" of Texas Governor Greg Abbott with Secretary Blinken and urged the Administration to "intervene and remove the death traps that Abbott has installed, in the name of human rights," Castro also wrote on Twitter.

Two Texas newspapers charged that officers from Governor Abbott's border security initiative, Operation Lone Star, have been ordered to push small children and nursing infants back into the Rio Grande River and deny water to asylum seekers, even in the extreme heat conditions.

Reports released by the Houston Chronicle and San Antonio Express News newspapers cite an email message from a Texas Department of Public Safety agent sent to a superior, describing the actions as "inhumane."

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