

Venezuelan Opposition Member Arrested for Arson Attack



Caracas, Apr 4, (RHC), -- A member of the right-wing opposition Popular Will party has been arrested for their involvement in a terrorist attack on the Ministry of Housing and Habitat last Tuesday, Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro said on Thursday.

Maduro said the assailant gave authorities the names of the other eight people involved in the attack, which endangered the lives of the ministry's 1,200 employees, as well as 89 children who were at a daycare center there.

On Tuesday, masked individuals linked to the Venezuelan opposition set ablaze the Ministry of Housing, which burned for 25 minutes.

"Investigations carried out by the Venezuelan authorities determined that it was a Popular Will party militant," Maduro announced at the presidential office.

The ministry is located in the city of Chacao in opposition-controlled Miranda state, where the governor is Maduro's former rival and presidential runner-up Henrique Capriles.

A third of the building was destroyed in the attack. Housing Minister Ricardo Molina said that three of the children at the daycare center later required oxygen treatment.

Molina also complained that municipal security agents failed to respond to the fire, and blamed both Chacao Mayor, Ramon Muchacho, and Capriles.

Earlier this year, the Popular Will party's leader, Leopoldo Lopez, was jailed by authorities on charges of inciting violence.

Venezuela is the scene of violent anti-government protests since mid-February. The protests, organized by U.S.-backed hardline opposition sectors, have been marred by attacks on government institutions and supporters.

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