

101 Central American migrants detained after raids in Mexico



Mexico City, June 28 (RHC)-- Mexico's Federal Police Wednesday detained 101 migrants from El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala and Nicaragua in two surveillance operations carried out at Veracruz, a southern Mexican state which is about 450 miles from the border with Guatemala.

In the first operation, the police arrested 86 migrants who were hiding in a cargo truck that was crossing through the Tierra Blanca municipality. According to authorities, one of them would be a "coyote" or migrant smuggler. In the other operation, federal agents stopped six adults and nine minors who were traveling in a bus at the Canoas-El Palmito highway.

In both cases, the Central Americans, who were detained for not carrying papers that prove their legal immigration status, were taken to the National Institute of Migration (Inami) facilities in Veracruz.

These surveillance operations, officially called "migrant rescue" actions, are part of the 'United for Building Peace' program, which involves the National Defense Secretariat (Sedena), the Navy Secretariat (Semar), the Public Security Secretariat, the National Guard and the Federal Police, as local media La Jornada reported.

Forced to leave their homes and countries due to poverty and violence, thousands of Central American migrants have entered Mexico in an attempt to reach the U.S. southern border since October 2018. In

response to this exodus, President Donald Trump announced on May imposing of tariffs on all Mexican products as punishment for not stopping migration.

On June 7, however, Mexico temporarily avoided such economic sanctions in exchange for committing to halting the Central American migrant flows to the United States. In order to do so, President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador (AMLO) sent more than 20,000 National Guard agents to the southern and northern borders of his country.

The Mexican decision to deploy security forces, however, has been questioned by human rights organizations. They argue that migrants could become even more vulnerable to abuses and violence.

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