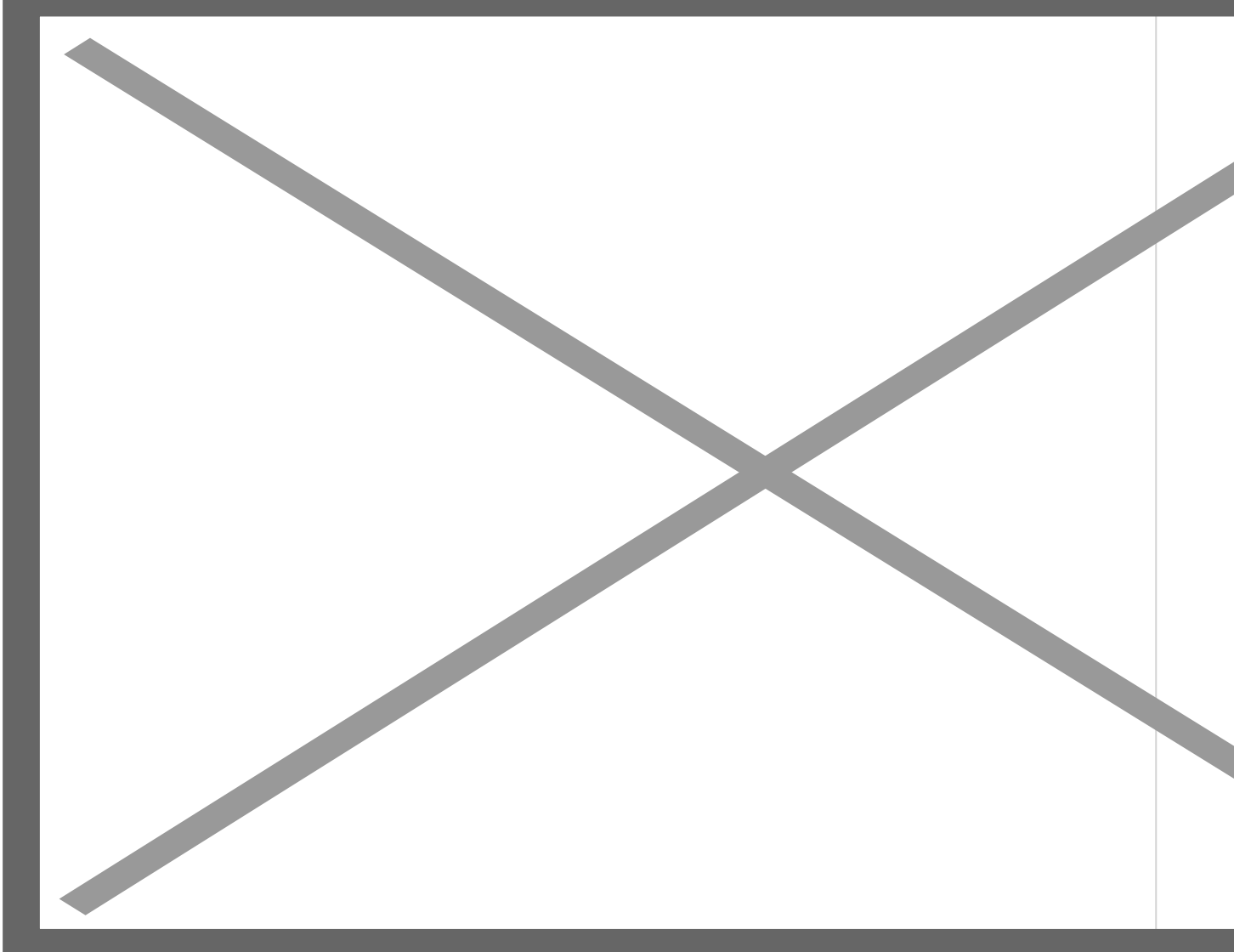


Haitian gang members storm Palace of Justice in Port-au- Prince

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Port-au-Prince, June 11 (RHC)-- Armed men identified as gang members operating in Village de Dieu, stormed the Palace of Justice in Port-au-Prince, in an action in which they clashed with elements of the police who tried unsuccessfully to prevent the seizure of the building.

The government commissioner, Jacques Lafontant, reported that alleged members of the Five Seconds gang, broke into the judicial headquarters and fired in various directions, despite police resistance.

Lafontant told the press that at least six law enforcement vehicles and four others belonging to government commissioners are now in the hands of the gang.

Witnesses who saw the assault referred to several injured and traumatized citizens. Several vehicles assigned to magistrates were taken away by the criminals.

"I just escaped death. We were six occupants in a car that suffered a projectile attack. The vehicle overturned, our lives were saved only by a miracle," testified Arnel Rémy, the lawyer and spokesman for the Lawyers' Collective for the Defense of Human Rights.

Faced with this situation, the lawyer accused the state authorities of being responsible for this situation that is becoming uncontrollable in Haitian society.

This same armed group, which operates in the Haitian capital, has been identified as responsible for the kidnapping of 38 people, an event that occurred hours before the seizure of the palace. In a video that went viral on social networks, the Izo gang leader said he kidnapped these passengers in response to the recent execution of one of his soldiers by the government commissioner of Miragoane, Jean Ernst Muscadin.

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