

Death toll from Ecuador jail riots reaches 31 as army asserts control



Quito, July 27 (RHC)-- The death toll from a wave of jail riots in Ecuador's most dangerous prison has reached 31, authorities say, hours as the government declared a 60-day state of emergency for the country's prisons. The development came late on Tuesday after some 2,700 soldiers were deployed to take control of the over-crowded Guayas 1 prison in the port city of Guayaquil.

According to the prosecutor's office, the violence between rival gangs also left 14 wounded, before the government took "total control" over the situation at Guayas 1, which houses more than 5,600 inmates.

“With effort, commitment, and continuous work, we will move forward and recover the peace that organized crime has taken from us,” President Guillermo Lasso wrote on Twitter. “We have to be more united than ever to win this battle.”

Earlier, the president ordered the military forces to assert control over Ecuador’s prisons, saying in a decree that inmates in Guayaquil used firearms during the unrest and set fire to facilities using gas tanks.

According to the decree, at least one of the dead in the violence had been beheaded.

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