

Chile to Investigate Conservative Politicians for Tax Fraud



Santiago de Chile, June 23 (teleSUR-RHC)-- Chilean prosecutors announced on Monday that they have opened an investigation against conservative politicians over alleged tax fraud, as the government sent a bill to Congress that seeks to demand more transparency from political parties. The move follows a trial against four members of the Independent Democratic Union (UDI) - the closest political party to former dictator Augusto Pinochet - who are accused of financing their election campaigns with false receipts and donations from companies under investigation for tax fraud.

Those accused on Monday include a senator, a deputy, the UDI founder Jovino Novoa and Santiago's former mayor Pablo Zalaquett. The defense of those accused say they didn't commit any crime, however high profile non-profit organizations as the *Fundacion Ciudadano Inteligente* (Smart Citizen Foundation), which is focused on the promotion of transparency and social accountability, have demanded prison terms for the conservative suspects.

Authorities in Chile are tackling the rampant corruption that has brought to light a series of scandals that embroiled numerous politicians across the political spectrum of the South American country.

Early this year the Attorney General opened an investigation into the so called Penta case, which involves allegations of irregular financing of political campaigns through a group mostly formed of conservative politicians and rich businessman. The eldest son of President Michelle Bachelet, Sebastian Davalos, was also accused of using his influence to secure a bank loan from Penta.

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