

Car bomb explodes in Colombia police barracks, killing 21



Bogota, January 18 (RHC)-- A car bomb exploded at a police academy in Colombia's capital Bogota Thursday, killing at least 21 people and wounding more than 80, authorities said.

The bomb went off at the General Santander Police Academy in the south of the capital, Mayor Enrique Penalosa told reporters.

The Defense Ministry initially put the death toll at nine, but more of the wounded died overnight and the toll now stands at 21. Authorities did not immediately say if the dead and wounded were police or civilians.

Colombian President Ivan Duque returned to the capital from the west of the country, where he had been attending a security meeting and had ordered security forces to find the perpetrators and bring them to justice.

"All Colombians reject terrorism and are united to confront it," he said on Twitter. Images on social media showed the remains of a vehicle in flames in the parking area of the police school, and emergency responders at the scene.

On the outskirts of the police complex dozens of family members of the cadets gathered crying and seeking information about what happened to the students hoping to become police officers.

Meanwhile, ambulances were leaving the area with the wounded as helicopters patrolled the skies.

The explosion also broke the windows of several apartment buildings and houses near the establishment. Witnesses told reporters at the site that the vehicle violently entered the police training center before the

explosion in which the driver also died.

"It's a car bomb that unfortunately violated security filters," Vice President Marta Lucia Ramirez told reporters.

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