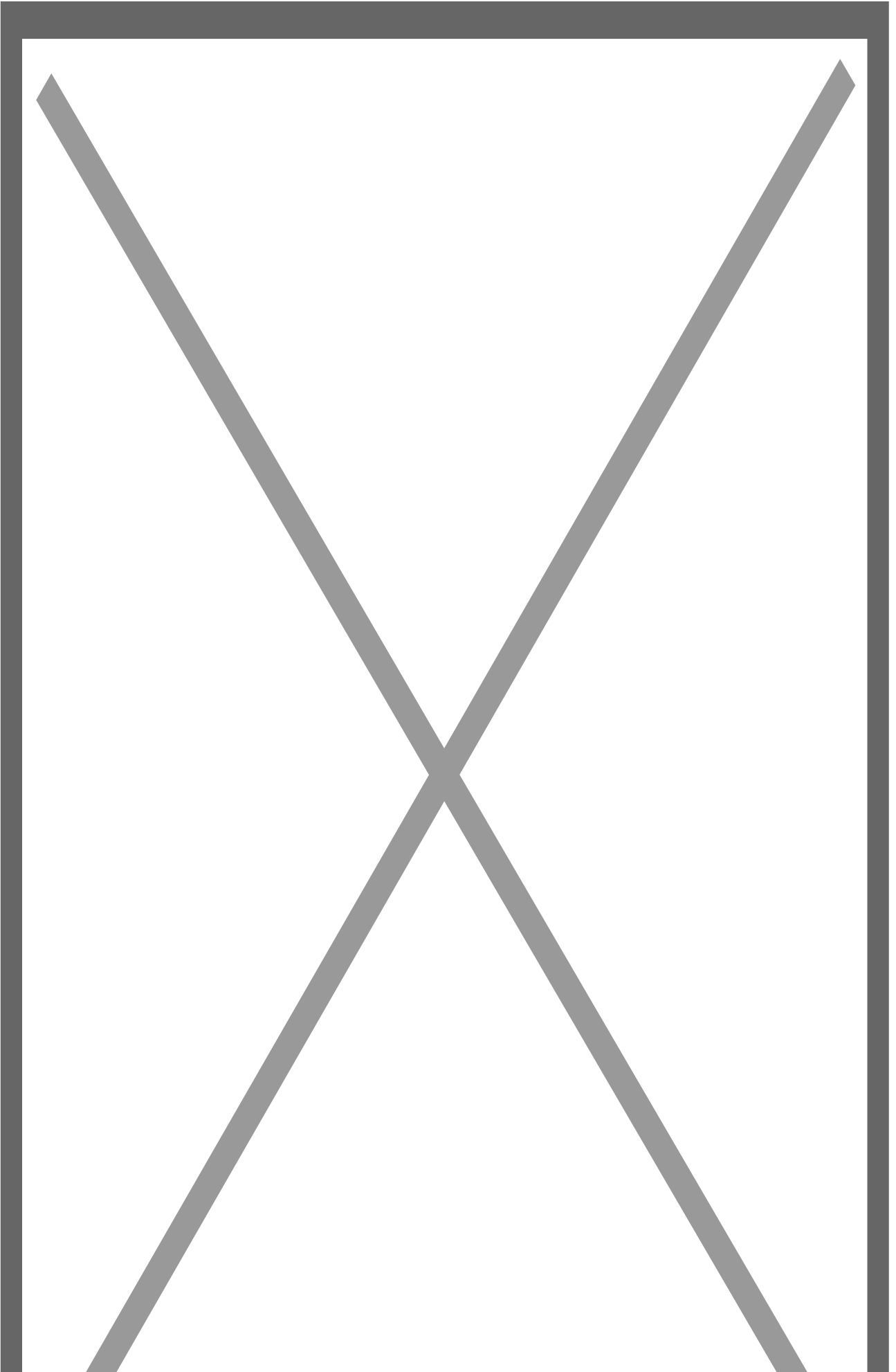


President of Conaie illegally detained in Ecuador

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??The Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador (Conaie) has denounced that the Police and the national Armed Forces illegally detained the movement's president, Leonidas Iza Salazar. ??

Quito, June 14 (RHC)-- The Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador (Conaie) has denounced that the Police and the national Armed Forces illegally detained the movement's president, Leonidas Iza Salazar. The group posted an urgent message on its account on the social network Twitter, along with a video showing the violent detention that took place in the Lasso sector, near Pastocalle in the province of Cotopaxi, according to local media.

"We call on our organizational structure, to RADICALIZE the de facto measures, for the FREEDOM of our maximum leader and for the dignity of our struggle," Conaie stressed.

In the early morning hours, local time, Ecuadorian President Guillermo Lasso explained that they were arresting the protest leaders in the framework of the national strike, without specifically mentioning the Conaie leader.

Indigenous groups have set up roadblocks on highways in Ecuador in protest of rising gasoline prices and the economic policies of right-wing President Guillermo Lasso. The protesters were blocking roads with burning tires, stones, trees and mounds of earth in at least 10 of the country's 24 provinces, including Pichincha, home to the capital Quito, authorities said on Monday.

Protesters are calling on Lasso's government to freeze gasoline costs at a lower price, stop plans to expand oil and mining development, and extend deadlines for small farmers to pay off debts with banks.

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