

Haydee Gastelu, a Mother of Plaza de Mayo, dies in Argentina

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Haydee Gastelu de Garcia. | Photo: Twitter/ @hijos_capital

Buenos Aires, December 21 (RHC)-- Argentinean Haydee Gastelu de Garcia, one of the first fourteen Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo, has died at the age of 94 as a result of a cerebrovascular accident.

On April 30, 1977, she arrived at Mayo Square in Buenos Aires to demand justice for the disappearance of her son, Horacio Garcia, and her daughter-in-law, who were kidnapped in August 1976 by the dictatorship in the city of Banfield.

“Another Mother has left us, and what a Mother! The suffering is enormous,” said Taty Almeida, a human rights activist whose son, a medical student, was also killed by the Argentinean military during the dictatorship.

Born in 1928, Haydee was the daughter of one of the first socialists in the town of San Justo, where her father used to take her to May Day marches and political rallies. She was the mother of Alicia, Diego and Horacio, who was a conscript at the time he was illegally detained at the Federal Security Superintendence.

Horacio Garcia was murdered in the so-called "Fatima Massacre" -- in which 20 men and 10 women were assassinated and dynamited on August 20, 1976. In 1999, his remains were identified by the Argentinean Forensic Anthropology Team.

"Horacio was taken from you by the last civic-military-ecclesial dictatorship... Only his remains gave you back some peace and even a bit of happiness," the Mayo Square Mothers said in a letter in memory of Haydee.

"Since that fateful day you became a firm and incessant seeker of justice and truth. Serene and wise, your big heart made you a companion of so many mothers and a mother of many sisters of the disappeared."

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