

Brutal repression leaves 17 dead in Peru

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Lima, January 10 (RHC)-- On Monday, Peru experienced one of the bloodiest days since Dina Boluarte assumed the presidency on December 7, 2022. Security forces under her command murdered 17 people in the city of Juliaca, bringing the total number of deaths to 46.

According to the Ombudsman's Office, most of the 17 protesters died in the vicinity of the Juliaca airport, where hundreds of citizens were gathered demanding the resignation of Boluarte, the closure of Congress, the holding of general elections this year, the formation of a constituent assembly, and the immediate release of former president Pedro Castillo.

"The solution to this problem is political. That's why we call on Congress and the Executive branch to find a real way out," Ombudsman Eliana Revollar said, acknowledging that the levels of violence are increasing.

Ismael Cornejo, the director of the Regional Health Directorate in Puno, said that the population denounced that the repressive forces used helicopters to drop tear gas canisters and shoot at the demonstrators.

At a road blockade in the Chucuito district, one of the victims of police brutality was a 35-week-old baby who died in the ambulance that was taking him to a hospital to be treated for respiratory failure and sepsis.

So far, Boluarte has not said anything directly related to the 17 deaths that occurred in Juliaca. However, she blamed leftist social and political organizations for formulating demands that are only "a pretext to continue generating chaos in the cities." In a similar vein, Prime Minister Alberto Otarola blamed the protesters for being part of "an organized, vandal and violent attack against the institutions."

Regarding the deaths that occurred as a result of the actions of the police and the army, however, the authorities do not offer clear and direct justifications.

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