Beat: Miscellaneous

At least 6 killed in western Guatemala clashes

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USPA News - Clashes in western Guatemala have resulted in the deaths of at least six indigenous people and several injuries, according to the United Nations (UN), which dispatched human rights officers to the region. Clashes between indigenous communities, police and the military in Guatemala`s Department of Totonicapan on Thursday have resulted the deaths of six indigenous peasants and at least 30 injured, Rupert Colville, a spokesperson for the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), said.

Speaking during a press conference in Geneva, Colville said seven soldiers were also reported to have been injured in the incident. According to the UN reports indicated that the day started with a large number of indigenous people putting up several roadblocks protesting against the increase of electrical tariffs and provision of other basic services, but Colville noted that there have been conflicting reports about the location in which the incident occurred. "Details remain unclear and our office in Guatemala is shortly sending two teams of human rights observers ? one to SololÃ¡ Department and one to Totonicapan ? to verify the facts and follow up on the incidents," Colville said. The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Navi Pillay, visited Totonicapan during her mission to Guatemala in March, during which she met with traditional indigenous authorities to discuss a range of human rights concerns. Guatemala was one of the first signatories of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which underscores that indigenous peoples have the right to participate in decision-making in matters which would affect their rights.

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