



AMERICA/COLOMBIA - "We cannot remain silent, we have to react", said Mgr. Epalza in denouncing bribe

Buenaventura (Agenzia Fides) - The Bishop of Buenaventura, His Exc. Mgr. Hector Epalza Quintero, P.S.S, launched the alarm with regards to the situation of the port where many traders live in anguish because of extortion.

A note sent to Fides by a local source, reports that the Bishop pointed out that intimidation does not spare even the most humble activities, such as street vendors and fruit sellers, as well as shopkeepers and tradesmen of all kinds, who have to pay a 2 euro bribe per day up to 50 euro per week.

"In Buenaventura there are those who collect taxes, "vaccine" (the name given to bribe) from everyone, even from small chicken and potato sellers; everyone must pay these rascals who live at the expense of others and this saddens me very much", said the Bishop.

It is not the first time that Mgr. Epalza denounces the terrible situation in which people live in Buenaventura. In June he had in fact denounced the existence of houses where people are brought in order to kill them. "We cannot remain silent and complacent before these situations, we must react and seek true justice, we must be realistic", said Mgr. Epalza.

The Bishop had also denounced criminality during the funeral of the teacher Estela Cortez brutally murdered on August 13. On that occasion he said: "We know that the authorities and the police do their job, but this kind of violence does not stop, people are afraid and the poorest suffer in silence".

According to information sent to Fides, the population does not report the crimes. "We want to intervene, but we have no information, we ask the victims to lodge a complaint" said the Chief of Police of the Port. (CE) (Agenzia Fides 20/08/2013)