
Suspicious about Concealed Deaths during Hurricane in Puerto Rico

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San Juan, Nov 21 (Prensa Latina) The repetition by the Puerto Rican Government that only 55 deaths were reported due to Hurricane Maria has revived suspicions about concealment, after the U.S. TV station CNN increased the number of fatal victims to 499.

The abysmal difference between official data and those from CNN has sounded the alarm that authorities want to conceal the truth, after the collapse of the power system in the country, as a result of which 69 hospitals had no electricity and their generators collapsed due to fuel shortages.

At present, 18 hospitals still have no electricity, so surgeries are performed in a limited number using generators.

The Puerto Rican Government has requested 'evidence' of the deaths caused by the hurricane, although it controls the agencies in charge of collecting those statistics.

Public Security Secretary Hector M. Pesquera asked the funerary services to provide information on the deaths that might be related to Hurricane Maria to carry out the relevant investigations.

'Any citizens or relatives who have evidence that a death is related, directly or indirectly, to Hurricane Maria and that we have not counted it yet can provide that information for our consideration to make the relevant investigation,' he demanded.

CNN made contact with 112 funeral parlors, and nearly half of them refused to provide statistics, but despite that, the number of deaths related to Hurricane Maria increased to 499.

The TV station made it clear that some funeral parlors did not answer their phones, while others refused to provide information about the deaths reported between September 20, when the hurricane hit the island, and October 19.

The director of the Association of Funerary Parlors of Puerto Rico, Eduardo Cardona, confirmed that reporters got information from nearly half of the funeral parlors that are still operating after the emergency.

Puerto Rican Interior Minister William Villafañe insisted that the official number of deaths is 55, so he demanded evidence proving otherwise.

San Juan Mayor Carmen Yulín Cruz Soto recalled that Pesquera instructed the Forensic Sciences Institute to cremate 911 bodies between September 20 and October 18.

'That number is much higher than the average that the government itself has mentioned and the government has to respond about the causes and why those deaths are registered,' Cruz Soto demanded.
