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May 17, 2023



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Once again, the alleged lack of management by the Department of Roads of the Government of Huila is [news](#), after the communities and even the municipal administrations themselves, pointed out that a large part of the lag in terms of infrastructure and road improvement would apparently have based on negligence on the part of the portfolio, headed by the official Eliana Conde.

Now the case occurred after the strike in the municipality of Palermo, by the inhabitants of the village of San Francisco, the Páez Baché Indigenous Council and the Pro Vías Committee, who decided on the morning of this Tuesday, May 16, to protest in front of to the Mayor's Office to demand the construction of the La Goleta bridge, the repair of roads, electrification, gasification and social investment.

It should be noted that the vehicular bridge is located over the Baché River in the village of San Francisco. And according to the same Indigenous Community, Governor Luis Enrique Dussán, committed himself in the last national strike to fixing this infrastructure

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committed himself in the last national strike to making this infrastructure.

"The Governor agreed with the indigenous community and with the La Goleta sector in meetings at the national strike that he would contribute more than half of the value that the studies of the bridge yielded. In the month of December, in the Casa de Paso in the Regional Indigenous Council, he said the Mayor's Office had not said anything, and that the delay was theirs but when there was a strike, he said "we are going to build the bridge", so now You cannot take the body out and say no," said indigenous leaders.

At the same time, they stressed that it would be convenient to demand investments from **Ecopetrol** for a new infrastructure. "60% of the royalties that the municipality receives come from the San Francisco village, this is not to ask **Ecopetrol** but to demand it," they indicated.

Stalled projects

Meanwhile, Rocío Laguna, president of the San Francisco community action board, pointed out with regard to the arrangement of the road, that interventions are expected to be carried out in the coming days, however the bridge continues to be the nerve center at the protest.

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Therefore, it is expected that next Thursday, May 18, the total closure will be carried out on the main road, at the height of the Aleluyas section from 6:00 am to 7:00 pm.

Another point that has also raised eyebrows was the proposal of the Mayor's Office of Palermo, which indicated that it seeks to give up five projects close to seven billion pesos, in order to have sufficient resources and be able to carry out the construction of the new road work.

"Our position is that as a community we will not decline or renounce the patching of the Juncal-Palermo highway, that is a commitment that the governor must fulfill with the people. In the same way, we request a review of the studies and designs of the bridge, since we consider that there are cost overruns," indicated Medina.

Faced with the issue, Natalia Caviedes Chinchilla, mayoress of the municipality of Palermo, indicated during the dialogue table, with the different actors of the protest, the Ombudsman and engineers of the Government of Huila, the difficulties they have had for the execution of various projects, to which the Ministry of Roads and Infrastructure must be given viability.

"We have to concentrate on the execution of this bridge, but since 2021 we have had a strong winter wave, which the Administration has tried to solve but the budget for all needs has not reached us. There are many communities and families that are still waiting for a real and effective solution," the president said in the first place.

In turn, he stressed that this work is transcendental because it is necessary for the people of that area to be able to enter their plots, their farms, "for this reason the Municipal Administration acquired a commitment in the demonstration that took place in the month of August 2022, where it culminated in the Municipal Council with the presence of our legal advisors and the municipal planning secretary, where the commitment to hire the studies and designs was acquired, that is, the consultancy.

This is our support to carry out a work that meets the technical and durability conditions that a



very important flow goes through", indicated Caviedes Chinchilla.

At the same time, he pointed out that based on this work, different decisions were made, including the need to build a bridge according to the regulations, which, although they had thought of an approximate cost of \$5,000 million maximum, the consultancy yielded a value of \$12,000 millions.

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"This is too high a value for absolutely everyone, and we were the most affected by this news, because ultimately it is a third-order road, that is, a municipal road. At that time we went to the Huila Governor's Office on February 10, there in a meeting in the governor's office we discussed different issues, because this issue is important but there are also other sectors that have required investment.

With the Governor we do not draw up minutes, we do not sign any document. The Governor is a very technical person, a person of his word and we dealt with six projects that day, there were also some commitments, which I myself published responsibly", he pointed out.

Among the commitments highlighted by the president are:

- Paving of the citadel Julián Polanía for a value of \$4,400 million to pave the 21 roads of the citadel, where the Government committed to half the project.
- Construction of the El Chocó bridge, expected for more than 30 years, for a value of \$890 million.

Initiatives, which according to the Mayor, have already been approved with royalty resources, "because the truth is that with these two projects we have spent more than a year and a half with the Governor's Office making technical roundtables and they are always problems for their approval," he established.

- In project number three is the construction of walls for more than \$2,157 million, after the emergency due to the winter wave in rural areas, located a year and five months ago in the Governor's Office.
- In fourth place is the financing for the construction of the pedestrian path of the Santa Rosalía cave, at 50%, that is, \$650 million.
- And finally, the construction of the El Juncal aqueduct.
- In addition to the construction of the La Goleta Bridge.

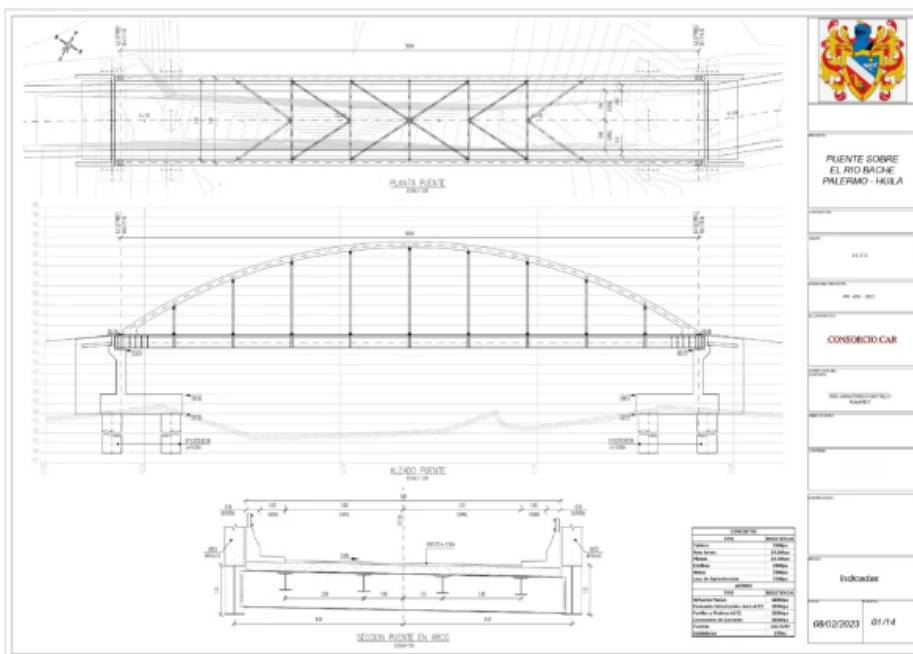
"We handed over four folders to the Roads Secretary, again the project of the bridge construction consultancy: February, March, April, May. Four months have passed and we could not advance with the project in the citadel because they put thousands of obstacles in our way, we could not advance in the project of the El Chocó bridge, because they also put thousands of inconveniences, we could not advance in the construction of the wall because today They no longer answer us, when they told us that they were going to finance us 100%. On the path to the cave we are waiting to see if they co-finance us and the La Goleta bridge, the response from the Department of Roads is that it is very high", indicated the Mayor.



Finally, Natalia Caviedes, pointed out that they have proposed to the Departmental Government to advance technical tables, given that the portfolio has engineers specialized in the construction of bridges, but reiterated that four months have passed without results, and that at the meeting on May 15 , they encountered two very complex situations.

"They tell us two things: one that the bridge is the responsibility of the municipality and the Government has nothing to do with it when there is an act here where their support is supported because we cannot co-finance or finance and I wonder, what happens with us, as municipality that we have had to attend to all the departmental roads that have had thousands of landslides and damage as a result of the winter wave and that are not our responsibility?"

The responsibility belongs to everyone, but they also tell us that they did not know about the project, which is not true. Perhaps one part of the word and the good faith of the people, I myself delivered and knew the value of the project on February 10 to the Secretary of roads ".



And he added that "the municipality complied with the consultancy and we don't know what else

to do. Today the truth is that it is disrespectful to say that the municipality does not know management in the Governor's Office of Huila. We have the supports since 2021, on April 29 we send you a photographic record, management records, on May 3 we tell you again that the most important affectations and that the bridge requires support from the national government, we do a traceability, we attach them photographic record but we did not receive an answer ”, he pointed out.

Finally, it was established by the Administration, that the proposal is still standing, where the Government redirects the resources previously presented for the construction of the bridge, an infrastructure with which the support of entities such as **Ecopetrol** will be sought under the “works for taxes” model. ”. In order to find out about the work carried out by the Departmental Roads Secretariat, **Diario del Huila** contacted the official, however it was not possible to obtain a response.

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- FUNCA HUILA VEDELA LA TIERRA 2009
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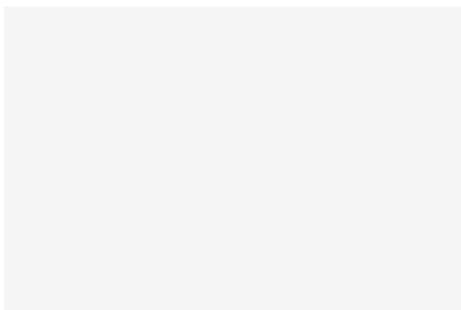
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