

Venezuela: Second TV station threatened

by UPI

CARACAS, Venezuela - Venezuela's leftist government accused a leading TV station of calling for the assassination of President Hugo Chavez, El Universal reported Tuesday.

Globovision TV was said to be openly calling for the death of Chavez when it aired the 1981 assassination attempt of Pope John Paul II accompanied by the phrase, "This doesn't end here."

The accusation against Globovision follows the decision by Venezuela to shut down an opposition TV station and replace it with a state-backed network triggered angry protests Monday.

The Venezuelan Social Television started broadcasting shortly after midnight, taking over the frequency previously occupied by Radio Caracas Television.

The state-run broadcast included traditional songs and dances, cartoons, documentaries and a statement from station President Lil Rodriguez -- who said that as a self-respecting nation, Venezuela now has a new source of messages of dignity, VOA reported.

But RCTV employees and university students protested in Caracas Monday, calling the station closure an attack on free speech. Bank worker Marycel Montiel said she joined a protest to denounce Chavez' authoritarian policies, comparing them to measures taken in Cuba.

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