

Brazilian Police Occupy Crime-Ridden Rio Favela



Rio de Janeiro, March 14 (RHC) -- Brazilian police on Thursday took over peacefully one of Rio de Janeiro's most crime-ridden favelas, as part of a "pacification" plan in the lead-up to the 2014 World Cup Games.

Nearly 300 Military Police officers in armored vehicles occupied the streets of Vila Kennedy, a favela of some 25,000 people in eastern Rio, overcoming barricades set up by residents, but otherwise meeting no resistance, official sources said.

Following the operation, which took less than 20 minutes, some 38 Pacification Police Units (UPP) or stations will be installed at Vila Kennedy to reclaim the neighborhoods from rival drug gangs.

Another 350 officers were deployed in "satellite operations" at neighboring favelas, to prevent gang members from attempting to flee Vila Kennedy for other places.

The "pacification" campaign, launched in 2008, aims to have all of Rio's favelas under the Pacification Police Units' control by 2016, when Rio will also host the Olympic Games.



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