

Bolsonaro ordered by Brazil lawmakers to disclose results of his COVID-19 tests



Brasilia, April 16 (RHC)-- Brazil's legislators have cornered President Jair Bolsonaro on COVID-19, obliging him to show evidence of his coronavirus status. He claimed he'd tested negative twice, yet refused to make the results public.

The country's Chamber of Deputies submitted a formal request to the presidency on Wednesday, giving it 30 days to release documents on Bolsonaro's coronavirus tests. Refusal to provide the information to the legislators is apparently not an option, as it would violate Article 50 of Brazil's constitution and invoke criminal liability.

Bolsonaro was tested twice for the new coronavirus in March, after he returned from the United States, where he'd met his U.S. counterpart Donald Trump and other high-ranking officials. Although the Brazilian president insisted he was not infected by the dreaded disease, he still refused to make the actual data from his tests publicly available.

Brazil's leader has become one of the most prominent coronavirus-deniers in recent weeks, repeatedly claiming that the pandemic was blown out of proportion and insisting that lockdown measures would have

way too grave an impact on the country's economy, making them an unacceptable price to pay for lowering health risks.

Such a stance put Bolsonaro at odds with local authorities across Brazil, who tried to implement some anti-coronavirus measures, as well as with his own health minister Wanderson de Oliveira, who believed the pandemic to be a legitimate threat.

The row between Bolsonaro and de Oliveira ultimately led to the downfall of the minister, who resigned on Wednesday. Shortly before he stepped down, media reports suggested that the official expected to be fired by the president later this week – and apparently moved preemptively.

So far, Brazil has recorded over 25,700 coronavirus cases, with more than 1,500 deaths. While Bolsonaro's laissez-faire approach might seem to be working, the country has carried out a relatively small number of tests for Covid-19, and the actual spread of the disease might be significantly higher.

Worldwide, the coronavirus has already affected more than two million people, killing almost 130,000. Around 500,000 people have recovered from the disease.

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