

# *Two Indigenous Pataxó land defenders shot dead in Brazil*

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Brasilia, January 22 (RHC)-- In Brazil, two Indigenous Pataxó land defenders were murdered Tuesday in the municipality of Itabela. Seventeen-year-old Nawir Brito de Jesus and 25-year-old Samuel Cristiano do Amor Divino were traveling to a farm when gunmen on a motorcycle shot them in the back, according to witnesses.

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This comes as the government of President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva has launched a series of raids in search of illegal loggers and ranchers in the Amazon rainforest in an effort to halt deforestation, which skyrocketed under the far-right former President Jair Bolsonaro.

The anti-deforestation mission's leader, Givanildo Dos Santos, told reporters: "The rhetoric of the former government created a mindset among people that led many to invade areas and deforest them, planting farms and thinking that the government would eliminate Indigenous lands and legalize these invasions for cattle production."

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