

Brazil Increases Military Spending for Olympics



Brasilia, July 13 (RHC)-- Brazil has announced that its armed forces would receive an additional \$24 million to help meet security needs for the August Olympic games in Rio de Janeiro, despite widespread austerity measures from the country's unelected interim president Michel Temer.

Brazil's Sports Minister Leonardo Picciani said that the extra money is for making "final adjustments" to Olympic security following a request from the defense ministry. "It is the necessary amount for our defense forces to do their work and that money will be available," Picciani said in Brasilia.

Earlier in July, the federal government loaned the state of Rio de Janeiro around \$900 million to help pay for more security and transport for the games. Budgets for police and security have been slashed recently, with a number of police taking part in strikes. The protesting police say they lack the basic necessities to carry out their work and have not been paid their salaries on time.

By May 2016 there had already been over 2,000 murders in the state of Rio de Janeiro, with other crimes also on the rise in a country which historically is one of the world's most violent.

Temer has been imposing a range of austerity measures. Earlier this month, he announced his intention to raise Brazil's pension age to 70, the highest in the world. In June, he proposed pulling Brazil out of several international bodies. And this week, the interim government said it was considering privatizing

state-run airports in order to save money.

The world's biggest sporting event will be held in Rio de Janeiro from August 5th to the 21st, with troops expected to patrol sports venues by July 24. However, the Rio Times reported that some security forces have already started patrolling Olympic venues.

Around 85,000 security personnel, including police and soldiers, will be deployed during the games, close to double the amount that were used in the previous Olympics in London.

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