

Brazil's Eduardo Cunha Threatens to 'Blow Up' Business World



Brasilia, April 11 (RHC)-- The jailed mastermind of the coup against former President Dilma Rousseff has threatened to expose new cases of corruption. Brazil's former lower house speaker and chief architect in parliamentary coup against Rousseff, Eduardo Cunha, in jail for fraud, said he has information about corruption cases in the South American country that could "blow up" the Brazilian business world.

Cunha said his material could have a big impact, starting with meat companies in the country, already embroiled in scandal over a large corruption scheme that recently came to light involving bribery to approve the the sale and export of contaminated meat. Authorities opened an investigation last month.

Many have speculated that Cunha, recently sentenced to 15 years in jail on corruption charges, could drop bombshell information that would further unravel fraud networks among Brazil's political elites, looking to bring down some of his closest allies with him.

According to the newspaper Folha de S. Paulo, some believe that Cunha will try to close a deal with the federal police to reduce his sentence or even negotiate his release from prison. But the newspaper also reported his legal defense team has denied that he is willing to do so.

Cunha was sentenced to 15 years and four months in jail for corruption, money laundering, and tax evasion charges, as the result of an investigation related to millions of dollars in kickbacks he received for the 2011 purchase of an oil field in the West African country of Benin by the state-run oil company, Petrobras.

According to the charges, Cunha received \$1.5 million in bribes for the oil field contract, which, according to an internal Petrobras investigation reported by local media, resulted in \$77.5 million in losses for the state-run oil company after no oil was found at the site.

The company has been at the center of a major anti-corruption probe in the South American country known as Operation Car Wash. The former lawmaker was the mastermind behind the parliamentary coup against former President Dilma Rousseff.

Cunha was removed from his position as speaker of the lower house after being suspended just weeks after the lower house pushed the impeachment process against Rousseff, over accusations that he intimidated lawmakers and hampered investigations in corruption allegations.

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