

Former Brazilian President to go on new election caravan this month



Brasilia, Feb 9 (RHC)-- Former Brazilian President Luiz Inacio 'Lula' da Silva, unphased by the upholding of his conviction on corruption charges by the Fourth Regional Federal Court, will embark on his latest caravan at the end of the month. The tour, scheduled to begin on February 27, will take him through the southern states of Rio Grande do Sul, Santa Catarina and Parana.

Starting in Santana do Livramento, Rio Grande do Sul, Lula will work his way up from the far south of the country to Curitiba, capital of the state of Parana, where his caravan is scheduled to end on March 7.

During a recent interview on Brazilian radio station Radio Jornal, he said "the word 'flee' doesn't exist in my life," in reference to having his passport confiscated by authorities.

The former head of state also vowed to fight on despite his legal woes, affirming that he's innocent. "I believe that I will be a (presidential) candidate because I believe the truth will prevail in the end," he said.

Last week, Judge Bruno Apolinario ordered that Lula's passport be returned to him, striking down a lower court's decision. Apolinario stated in his ruling that it is "only with great imagination" one could conclude

that Lula was planning to flee the country in reference to his presidential aspirations.

In late 2017, Lula embarked on three caravans called “Lula Around Brazil,” which took him through nine states in Brazil's northeast region, as well as the states of Minas Gerais, Espirito Santo, and Rio de Janeiro.

Having left office with a record approval rating of 83 percent, according to Datafolha, Lula currently tops electoral polls conducted by Vox Populi, Datafolha, Data Poder 360, Instituto Parana, the National Confederation of Transportation/MDA and Ipsos.

Lula still has a passionate following among Brazilians who remember his social policies and initiatives that drastically reduced hunger and poverty during his 2003-2010 presidency.

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