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## Brazil: After 6 Years Killer of TV Reporter Gets Special Release for Good Behavior

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Judicial authorities from Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, decided to put convicted murderer Claudino "Xuxa" dos Santos Coelho on a "semi-release" program for "good behavior," last month, according to the daily newspaper "Extra".

Xuxa, an alleged drug trafficker, was sentenced in 2005 to 23 years and six months in prison for the June 2002 murder of TV Globo reporter Tim Lopes. As he was arrested in August 2002, he has already completed one third of his sentence.

Under the program, he would be allowed out of prison by day as long as he returns at night. But according to "Extra", he has already violated this requirement.

"We expressed our satisfaction in 2005 when seven suspects were convicted of Lopes' murder, but now we share his family's incomprehension at this concession, which seems completely unjustified given the cruelty of the crime of which this prisoner was convicted," international press freedom organization Reporters Without Borders said.

Lopes was investigating sexual exploitation of minors by drug traffickers in the Rio de Janeiro favela of Vila del Cruzeiro in June 2002 when he was kidnapped, tortured and finally hacked to death by members the "Crazy Elias" gang, who burned his body. "Xuxa" and six other gang members were given sentences ranging from 23 to 28 years in prison.

### Journalist Attacked

Brazilian journalist Sergio Gobetti, who works for O Estado de S. Paulo newspaper, was assaulted December 18 by a security guard at the National Assembly building in Brazilian capital Brasília. Gobetti was trying to enter the building to cover the Brazilian Budget Plan vote when he was approached by a security guard who claimed that he did not have his identification visible.

Congressman Chico Alencar, who was present at the time of the incident, tried to stop the confrontation.

After the journalist showed his identification, the security guard grabbed him by the neck. Images of the incident can be viewed at: <http://terratv.terra.com.br/templates/channelContents.aspx?channel=2481&contentid=218841>

The president of the Federal District Journalists' Union, Romário Schettino, denounced the assault, saying, "The security guard, in the presence of congressman Chico Alencar, tried to choke the journalist, in a very clear act of

disrespect toward a congressman and a professional of the press."

The Assembly Social Communications Office said that the General Directorate of the Assembly has determined that the police will investigate the incident.

According to the Assembly Social Communications Office, the Investigative Police are speaking to Gobetti, police officers and witnesses and are analyzing film footage of the incident.

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