

Brazil to Send Dental Records to Help Identify New Orleans Victim

Contributed by Érica Santana
Tuesday, 13 September 2005

The Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Relations informed that the United States government asked the family of Benilda Caixeta Daniels to send her dental X-rays to help in the identification of a corpse that might be hers.

Daniels, aged 57, has been missing since the passage of hurricane Katrina through the city of New Orleans, where she lived alone in an apartment.

According to the director of the Department of Brazilian Communities Abroad, ambassador Manoel Gomes Pereira, Daniels, who is a quadriplegic, spoke with her family for the last time on August 29 and said that she was unable to leave the apartment. The Ministry received word that a body had been discovered in the apartment.

The ambassador said that the Brazilian government requested the case be handled expeditiously. "Through the consulate in Houston, we asked the US government to identify the body as quickly as possible. We don't know whether the corpse is Benilda's," he affirmed.

An official Brazilian mission left Monday, September 12, for the city of Baton Rouge, capital of the state of Louisiana, in the U.S., to accompany this case and those of other missing Brazilians.

According to the ambassador, there are no Brazilians on the list of fatalities, "but, with the number of victims, the possibility cannot be ruled out." He added that it is not possible to calculate the number of Brazilians affected by the passage of the hurricane through the southern United States, since the number of illegal immigrants in the country is substantial.

Of the 100 requests to locate missing Brazilians, the Brazilian consulate has already found 78. According to the Ministry's estimates, there are around 1.3 million Brazilians living in the United States.

Agência Brasil