

Brazil: Rio Fears Sports Complex Won't Be Ready for Pan-American Games

Contributed by Nelson Motta
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Despite construction delays at the sports complex that will be the headquarters of next year's Pan-American Games, the Minister of Sports, Agnelo Queiroz, said that the competition will be held in Rio de Janeiro, as planned.

"The population can remain calm, because the federal government is carrying out the entire agenda of tasks and responsibilities it assumed," the Minister remarked, following a meeting in the Planalto Palace with the mayor of Rio, César Maia, and ministers Antonio Palocci (Finance), Dilma Rousseff (presidential advisory staff), and Jaques Wagner (Institutional Relations).

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss a way out of the crisis prompted by the fact that construction of the sports complex, which is near the Rio de Janeiro automobile racetrack, is behind schedule.

"We will put together a calendar together with the Rio city hall to resolve the problem. The municipal government has already initiated the bidding process, and the federal government is willing to help execute this project," Queiroz explained.

According to mayor Maia, it will cost US\$ 142.6 million (R\$ 320 million) to conclude the sports complex. "I hope that the building site will be ready to go in a week. The project is expected to take a year and three months to finish," Maia commented.

"All the ministers said that I could return to Rio unconcerned, since the construction of the complex no longer constitutes a problem for the Pan-American Games," Maia said.

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