

# US Helps Break Up Brazilian Prescription-Drug Internet Gang

Contributed by Elma Lia Nascimento  
Saturday, 05 August 2006

With the help of the American Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) the Brazilian Federal Police broke up a Brazil-based international gang that used the Internet to sell prescription-only drugs from Brazil to clients in the US and many other countries including Japan, Australia and Mexico.

Mauro César Fileto Filho who lives in Atlanta, Georgia, in the United States and who is charged as being the manager of the gang's Internet page was arrested by DEA agents last week.

He is the son of the city attorney of São José do Rio Preto, a city in the interior of São Paulo state. Fileto Filho is known as a computer wiz and was responsible for maintaining a WEB presence for the group, using a Hong Kong webhost.

Eight people have been detained so far. Five of the gang participants were caught in Brazil, two others in Uruguay and one in the US. Some of the drugs were also seized in three pharmacies of Rio Preto.

Very little information has been released until now, however, because the investigations and the judicial process are being conducted in secrecy. All that is known is the little that leaked from authorities in Brazil.

Nicknamed Trafico.com, the international police operation has lasted over two years and still doesn't have a defined time to end.

More than 1,300 capsules were seized in Brazil when the police finally moved to arrest the drug gang members. For the most part the drugs were amphetamines, barbiturates and sedatives and were already in boxes ready to be shipped overseas through the Brazilian postal service.

"We will only talk to the press when we have finished all the investigations and we have no deadline to end them," said Davi Furlan, the chief of the Federal Police in São José do Rio Preto and the man in charge of the operation.

Mauro César Fileto, the attorney-general, also refused to comment about the son's arrest in the United States. When contacted by journalists he not only refused to make any comment, but also threatened to sue any newspaper that would publish his name. Apparently he is not talking about he subject even with close friends.

The mother of the youngster is a lawyer in São José do Rio Preto. Fileto Filho had entered the US several year ago with a student Visa to attend law school.

According to the Brazilian police, the head of the prescription-drugs gang is another youngster, Alessandro Peres Fávoro, 24, student of business administration and the son of a renowned doctor in São José do Rio Preto.

Apparently he was the one who created the site to sell the drugs. With his wife he used to package and dispatch the product all over. He lived in a luxurious apartment valued over half a million dollars and it was his unbridled consumerism and his habit of buying everything in cash that gave him away.

According to the authorities in order not to leave tracks Fávoro used other peoples bank accounts to receive the money from his clients. Uruguay was used for laundering the high amounts of cash.

Fávoro was arrested in the apartment he lives with his wife. She was also detained, but her name was not revealed by the police. Authorities say that they found more than a hundred envelopes with medications on the suspect's living room table and inside his car.

The police also believe that the scheme was going on for at least eight years, meaning that Fávoro is in the business of selling these drugs since he was 16. The investigations involving the Brazilian and American enforcement agencies, however, started two years ago.