

# *Indigenous leaders demand improvements in health care in Brazil*

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Brasilia, January 30 (RHC)-- The Articulation of Indigenous Peoples of Brazil (APIB) reports that indigenous leaders of the Terena and Guarani Kaiowá communities protested in front of the headquarters of the Special District of Indigenous Health (DSEI) of Mato Grosso do Sul demanding medical care.

On its Twitter account, according to APIB, the indigenous leaders demanded improvements in the health system, which they blamed for problems of negligence, lack of drugs and massive layoffs of medical staff attending in the villages. The organization adds that one of the complaints presented was the lack of information on whether the vaccination against COVID-19 will be prioritized in the native peoples.

For its part, the Indigenous Movement of Mato Grosso Do Sul reported that the demonstrators requested a meeting with the special secretary of Indigenous Health of this Brazilian state, Robson Santos da Silva.

If the meeting is held, the leaders will demand the resignation of the DSEI coordinator, Army Reserve Colonel Joe Saccenti Junior.

"He is an authoritarian coordinator, who does not dialogue with the communities. In the midst of a pandemic, instead of reinforcing the service to the indigenous communities, he dismissed village employees at the moment we needed it most," stated Terena community member and councilman of Dos Hermanos do Buriti, Eder Alcântara.

A study by the Oswaldo Cruz Foundation revealed that 48 percent of deaths from COVID-19 of hospitalized patients in Brazil correspond to members of indigenous communities, with the Terena community being the third with the highest number of deaths.

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