

# *The great tragedy of Brazil*

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With a fictional democracy, weakened by an authoritarian government led by Jair Bolsonaro, Brazil is the third country of the world with a highest number of deaths as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, and still has not flattened the curve of infections.

According to recent statistics, in the South American Power, there are 614,941 positive cases of the coronavirus and over 32,000 deaths.

The pressing and dramatic issue is that the numbers change every 24 hours at an alarming speed. So, from Thursday to Friday, almost 31,000 new cases were registered, and between Wednesday and Thursday, the daily death toll was 1,262 and 1,349, respectively.

About three weeks ago, specialists warned that if nothing was done to stop the chain of infections, Brazil could reach thousands of deaths every day. Nothing was done... and now the deaths exceed the predicted number.

But the most gloomy fact is that 50 days after the first documented patient with COVID-19, Brazil is still on the upward curve of infections and deceased.

One month ago, only a 40 percent of the municipalities registered cases, and now the percentage is 72 percent and still counting.

Much of the responsibility falls on President Jair Bolsonaro who not only ignored the advice of the scientific community regarding the handling of the health crisis, but he himself violated the most

elementary protection measures, thereby inviting other Brazilians to do the same. His motive was to protect the economy, which is being destroyed before a situation that exceeds all predictions.

Perhaps he should have paid attention to the Nobel Prize winner Paul Krugman, who explained this situation with overwhelming clarity and simplicity when he asked: “what good is increasing GDP if it kills you?”

Krugman and other award-winning economists summarized their recommendations to governments in three essential points. The first is to avoid collapse of the health system during the pandemic; the second, to help vulnerable citizens to make the quarantine bearable. And third, they recommend providing a systematic and extensive evaluation of the virus to determine the appropriate moment to start the reopening of businesses and the economy in general.

None of these suggestions have been followed in Brazil with Bolsonaro at the helm and experts fear that the lack of serious tests and statistics, will only increase coronavirus infections.

In simple and conclusive words: the economy will come back, but the dead cannot.

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