

Bolsonaro hoping Trump's return will help political comeback in Brazil

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Brasilia, November 30 (RHC)--Brazil's former President Jair Bolsonaro has expressed hope that U.S. President-elect Donald Trump's return to the White House in January will help bolster his own political

comeback, amid accusations that he took part in a failed coup in the South American nation.

The Wall Street Journal reported late on Thursday that Bolsonaro is banking on Trump pressuring Brazil with sanctions to delay enforcing a court ruling that bars him from office until 2030 for baselessly attacking the country's voting system before the 2022 elections he lost.

"Trump is back, and it's a sign we'll be back, too," Bolsonaro said in an interview with the U.S. newspaper.

Bolsonaro's remarks come just days after Brazilian police released a report implicating the former president in an alleged criminal organisation designed to overturn the 2022 election that he lost to his left-wing rival, President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva.

Bolsonaro "planned, acted and was directly and effectively aware of the actions of the criminal organisation aiming to launch a coup d'etat and eliminate the democratic rule of law", the report said.

The former army captain, who served as president from 2019 to 2022, has denied any wrongdoing and claimed to be the victim of a politically motivated witch-hunt.

Despite the coup accusations and other investigations against him, Trump's electoral victory earlier this month in the U.S. has injected new energy into Brazil's far-right and stirred hopes that Bolsonaro can mirror his return to power.

Bolsonaro often expressed admiration for Trump during the Republican's first term in office from 2017 to 2021, and he was widely dubbed "Trump of the Tropics" during his own presidency.

Similarly to Trump, who continues to say the 2020 election he lost to President Joe Biden was stolen from him, Bolsonaro spent months in the run-up to the 2022 vote in Brazil falsely claiming that the country's voting system was vulnerable to widespread fraud.

Shortly after his left-wing challenger Lula took office in January 2023, thousands of Bolsonaro's supporters who were angered over the election results stormed the presidential palace, Congress and the Supreme Court in the capital, Brasilia.

The attack drew comparisons to the insurrection in the U.S. two years earlier, on January 6, 2021, when a group of Trump supporters stormed the Capitol building in Washington, DC, to prevent Congress from certifying Biden's election victory.

Guilherme Casaroes, professor at the Fundacao Getulio Vargas's Sao Paulo School of Business Administration, said this week that Brazilian conservatives "are hoping [Trump] will use the threat of sanctions and other punitive measures to put pressure on Brazilian authorities to allow" Bolsonaro to run for president in 2026.

"Even if the threat of US sanctions doesn't by itself change judicial outcomes in Brazil, a global chorus of sympathy for Bolsonaro may, in fact, help him politically in Brazil, fuelling a sense of grievance and popular desire for his return", Casaroes wrote in Americas Quarterly.

[SOURCE: AL JAZEERA and NEWS AGENCIES]

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