

CUBA

Jailed boxing champion 'wanted to speak to Fidel'

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HAVANA --

An Olympic boxing champion who disappeared during the Pan American Games in Brazil but was later arrested and deported to Cuba had dreamed of airing his grievances with Fidel Castro, not defecting, his sister-in-law said Monday.

Two-time bantamweight champion Guillermo Rigondeaux, who arrived back in Cuba on Sunday, "wanted to speak to Fidel several times to explain his problems, but they never let him," said Marilyn Clavero, the sister of the boxer's wife, Farah Colina.

Clavero told The Associated Press that the boxer's relatives don't know when he will be allowed to return to his home, but that they were painting Rigondeaux's modest apartment in Havana and plan to feast on a pig when he arrives.

"Guillermo bought the pig before going to Rio, thinking about celebrating his return with a gold medal," she said.

Clavero said she didn't know what happened in Brazil, "but he didn't leave here with the idea of deserting."

BOLIVIA

U.S. CITIZENS WARNED TO AVOID MILITARY PARADE

LA PAZ -- The U.S. Embassy in Bolivia on Monday warned Americans not to attend a military parade to be hosted by President Evo Morales in the eastern city of Santa Cruz for fear of violence.

Thousands of Bolivian soldiers will march with indigenous groups in today's Armed Forces Day celebration in Santa Cruz, a hotbed of anti-government sentiment.

Leaders in the lowland city are demanding greater autonomy from Morales' government and see the parade as an unwelcome display of force by the populist president.

CUBA

EXILE GROUP WORRIED OVER HUNGER STRIKE

A Cuban exile group said Monday it is worried about the health of 22 migrants as they entered a second week on hunger strike at the U.S. naval base at Guantánamo Bay.

Since July 29 the Cuban migrants have consumed only liquids to protest Washington's refusal to let them settle in the United States, said Ramón Saúl Sánchez, president of the Miami-based exile group Democracy Movement.

"We might be coming to the moment where it becomes dangerous to their health," said Sánchez, who receives regular phone calls and e-mail from the migrants.