

Reporters Without Borders

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Americas - Brazil

Reporter murdered

Popular blogger Décio Sá gunned down in Maranhão state

24 April 2012

Décio Sá, a political reporter and high-profile blogger based in São Luís, the capital of the northeastern state of Maranhão, was gunned down in a bar yesterday. He had worked for 17 years on the political desk of *O Estado do Maranhão*, a regional paper owned by the Mirante de Comunicação group. His blog, [Blog de Décio](#), was one of the most popular in the northeast.

"Every effort must be made to shed light on Sá's murder, which was clearly planned with great care," Reporters Without Borders said. "We hope it will serve as warning to the authorities in the north and northeast about the dangers to which reporters are exposed. The authorities must ensure that journalists are able to work freely and safely when investigating corruption or the various kinds of trafficking.

"With three journalists killed, 2011 was already a deadly year for the Brazilian media but frequency of violence seems to be increasing with [four journalists murdered](#) in the past four months."

Maranhão state public safety secretary Aluísio Mendes told local media: "This was an instigated murder. The killers came into the bar with the intention of executing this journalist and they did not even try to cover their faces. This is a murder that requires a special investigation. We will investigate this very thoroughly."

Aged 42, Sá was gunned down in the Estrela Dalva bar in a waterfront area of São Luís that is popular with tourists. Witnesses said a man shot him six times and then left with an accomplice who was waiting for him outside on a motorcycle. A magazine compatible with the kind of bullets used in the murder was found at the scene. The murder weapon was of type used exclusively by the police, raising questions about the identity of the killers.

In the five years that Sá had keeping Blog do Décio, it had become one of the most widely read blogs in the state. He wrote about local politics, corruption and organized crime, which is endemic in the region.

Brazil fell 41 places in the latest Reporters Without Borders [press freedom index](#) and is now ranked 99th out of 179 countries.
