

Even From Prison, Lula Leads in Polls

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The Brazilian pollster, Data Folha, says that former president and current candidate Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva is far ahead of his competitors with **31 percent** of the nation's electoral support.

A founding member of the **Workers' Party (PT)** Lula says he has every intention of running in next October's presidential election.

Data Folha's poll released today shows that Lula is far ahead of his next two runner-ups, Jair Bolsonaro - currently being accused of using hate speech - and evangelical environmentalist, Marina Silva, who once formed a part of Lula's cabinet (2003-2008). Each has about 16 percent of voter support. In fourth place is Joaquim Barbosa, ex-president of the Federal Superior Tribunal (STF).

The Free Lula campaign continues in **Curitiba** outside of the prison where Lula has been held since April 8 after giving himself up to authorities the day before.

Protests in support of Lula have intensified since he was forced to begin carrying out a 12-year

sentence for supposed money laundering and receiving kickbacks in the Brazilian Car Wash scandal. Lula's defense team argues that the candidate is being denied his constitutional right to appeal this corruption conviction handed down nearly two weeks ago by Brazil's Fourth Regional Federal Court (TRF-4).

On Friday and Saturday, supporters of Lula held a Lula Libre ('Free Lula') conference in Sao Paulo with the intent to unite supporters, strategize a way to free the imprisoned former president, and overthrow the ongoing 'media siege.'

Brazilian Communist Party official Gerardo Nuñez told the media, "Lula is a political prisoner who is condemned without evidence."

Upcoming events to support Lula's presidency and release him from prison include an April 17, National Day of Mobilization against Red Globo, the Act in defense of Petrobras in Rio de Janeiro to be held on April 26, and on May 1 - May Day - there will be Rights and Freedom for Lula marches across the country.

Parties have until August 15 to register their official candidate with the Federal Electoral Tribunal (TSE). The PT says that Lula will remain the party's presidential candidat
