

Venezuela Arrests Eight Colombian Paramilitaries

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Caracas: Venezuela said on Friday it had arrested eight Colombians and two local residents suspected of paramilitary activities on the border between the two feuding South American neighbors, Reuters reported.

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Venezuela's Interior Minister Tarek El Aissami said the eight Colombians included a known paramilitary leader. Two guns of a type used by hitmen were captured with them, he said.

"All these people were intimidating the local population and especially threatening local businessmen," he told state television. "These people were handing out pamphlets, as the paramilitaries do, saying social cleansing was going to start that is to say murders and disappearances."

The arrests came a few days after the discovery of 10 corpses, in the same area, of mainly Colombians shot dead under murky circumstances.

The Venezuelan minister did not directly link that case to Friday's arrests.

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