

## Two Venezuela Bank Executives Arrested After Opposition Leader Found with Cases of Cash

The criminal investigation police (CICPC) seized four crates of new currency worth 205 million bolivars from a vehicle owned by Tintori's brother.

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*Two vice presidents of the Banco Occidental de Descuento (BOD) bank were arrested in connected with over 200 million bolivars found in a vehicle of Lilian Tintori, the wife of jailed opposition leader Leopoldo Lopez.*

Junior Fructuoso Marquez Ramirez, 67, vice president of interbank operations, and Luis Antonio Llavanero, vice president of operations and services, were arrested Thursday, the La Tabla website reported.

According to the Venezuelan investigative site, the two senior bank executives took advantage of their positions to allow the entry and exit of large sums of cash.

On Wednesday, the criminal investigation police (CICPC) seized four crates of new currency worth 205 million bolivars from a vehicle owned by Tintori's brother. The fresh notes of higher denominations that are just being introduced into circulation were still in the crates from which they were offloaded when they entered the country.

The opposition spokeswoman took to her twitter account to say the funds were for medical expenses for the family's 100-year-old grandmother.

Social media erupted following the news, with many mocking Tintori's claim.

The Attorney General's Office filed for Marquez Ramirez and Llavanero to be charged, while also summoning Tintori and her brother to appear before a court.

Given the court order prohibiting her exit from the country pending the investigation, Tintori was not able to travel to Europe to meet with right-wing leaders. She detained by officials of the Venezuelan Migration Service at the Maiquetia International Airport on Saturday when she attempted to board a Copa Airlines flight bound for Panama.



The BOD bank is owned by Víctor Vargas Irausquin, whose daughter is married to Spanish royal, Luis Alfonso de Borbon.

In April, the bank faced another scandal when its Vice President of Public Affairs, sociologist and university professor Tulio Hernandez, published messages on his Twitter inciting violence against government supporters, urging people to throw heavy objects at them. A day later a man threw a bottle of frozen water from a building, killing a nurse who was walking by a pro-government march.

Hernandez was forced to resign and the bank distanced itself from the remarks.

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