

What a disappointment!

RIO DE JANIERO (AP) — About 50,000 Brazilians hoping for a close encounter with a space ship from Jupiter jammed onto a farm near Rio today, only to have their expectations dashed when the predicted dawn arrival time came and went without a sign of Jovian visitors.

"A lot of people were frustrated of course," said Heralmir Ramirez, police chief of the nearby town of Casimiro de Abreu. "But most are leaving calmly and we haven't had any incidents of violence. What we do have is a tremendous traffic jam."

RAMIRIEZ, WHO ESTIMATED the crowd at 50,000, had called in 350 state and federal police to deal with the mass of people flooding his tiny hamlet of 6,000 residents.

Word of the forthcoming "visit" had been hot news in this nation of 120 million since last weekend when a Brazilian farmer told a national television audience he had learned by "telepathy" that the space ship from Jupiter would be landing on his farm today at 5:20 a.m.

(3:20 a.m. EST).

That news brought tens of thousands to the farm, about 120 kilometres east of Rio. They kept watch through the night, many sitting in cars and others sprawled across the rolling valley ringed by mountains.

Temperatures hovered around 20 degrees Celsius as dawn broke and the arrival time passed with the sun the only visible orb in the sky.

EDILICIO BARBOSA, THE FARMER and long-time UFO aficionado, who first announced the coming was nowhere to be seen after the Jovian fiasco. Authorities said they did not know where he was.

"On a scale of one to 10," said one self-styled UFO expert. "Barbosa's credibility has hit zero."

Interviewed on one of Brazil's most popular TV talk shows last Sunday, Barbosa said the people from Jupiter were coming to return a Brazilian helicopter pilot snatched in 1976 by the crew of an earlier probe from Jupiter. Indeed, a chopper pilot disappeared mysteriously on a flight off Brazil's Atlantic coast in that year.

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