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## **Murder of PRI Gubernatorial Candidate Latest Twist in Electoral Season in Mexico**

*by Carlos Navarro*

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The assassination of the top candidate in the Tamaulipas gubernatorial election confirmed Mexico's worst fears, that organized crime was attempting to influence the election results. Rodolfo Torre Cantú of the Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI), who was leading in the polls by a wide margin for the July 4 Tamaulipas gubernatorial race, was killed less than a week before the election after armed assailants ambushed his convoy on the way to the airport. The murder was the latest twist in a topsy-turvy campaign season in which the center-left parties and the conservative PAN have joined forces in several gubernatorial races, primarily to create a united opposition against the PRI. The PRI, which was expected to do well in most states, views the elections as the next major step in its effort to recover the presidency.

Torre Cantú—the candidate for a coalition comprising the PRI, the Partido Verde Ecologista de México (PVEM), and the Partido Nueva Alianza (PANAL)—was the second political candidate murdered in Tamaulipas this election year, with drug cartels the suspected perpetrators in both incidents. In May, José Mario Guajardo Varela, a PAN candidate for mayor in the community of Valle Hermoso, was gunned down along with his son and an employee (([SourceMex, 2010-05-26](#))).

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