



Written by [Christian Gomez](#) on March 3, 2015

At Least 14 Killed Last Week as Violence Escalates in Iguala, Mexico

At least 14 people have been killed in the past week in the city of Iguala, in the southwestern Mexican state of Guerrero, according to [Univision Noticias](#). Iguala was the site of the “forced disappearance” (abduction) of 43 college students from the Escuela Normal Rural Raúl Isidro Burgos (Raúl Isidro Burgos Rural Normal School), better known as the Escuela Normal Rural de Ayotzinapa (Normal Rural School of Ayotzinapa), between the night of September 26 and the morning of September 27, in 2014.



Reportedly, local police in collusion with organized crime were behind the kidnappings. On January 19, 2015, the Mexican newspaper [Vanguardia](#) reported:

Municipal police in different municipalities abducted at least a hundred people in just the past two years, according to areas of research from an open investigation by the [Mexican] Attorney General’s Office (PGR). Among the victims are not only students, but also men, women, children and an African priest. In many cases local police in Iguala and other towns in the area acted in collusion with organized crime. [Translated from Spanish.]

On November 4, 2014, former Iguala Mayor José Luis Abarca and his wife Maria from Los Angeles were found in Mexico City and arrested by the Federal Police and charged with six counts of aggravated homicide and one count of attempted homicide, according to the Mexican attorney general’s office, in connection with the disappearance of the 43 students. Former Mayor Luis Abarca and his wife are accused of killing six people and ordering Iguala’s local police to kidnap the students, most of whom were young men in their 20s.

On November 14, 2014, a wave of violent protests intensified in Iguala after federal authorities announced that they had uncovered evidence that dozens of young people were killed just an hour’s drive from the town. According to the British newspaper [The Guardian](#), “The attorney general, Jesús Murillo Karam, said the bodies were reduced to ashes and bone fragments after being burned for about 15 hours on a huge funeral pyre, with the remains collected in plastic bags and dumped in a nearby river.”

The remains were later identified as those of the students. Since the discovery of those bodies, more cremated remains have been found along the San Juan River and in pits throughout Iguala.

Despite Iguala being taken over by Mexico’s national police force, la Policía Federal (Federal Police), including special counter-organized crime units of the Gendarmería Nacional (National Gendarmerie), violence continues to escalate in the town.

On February 25 gunmen on motorcycles assassinated Luis Beltran Acosta, the coordinator of the



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Planning Committee for the Development of the State of Guerrero.

According to [Univision Noticias](#), on February 27, six more people were killed, allegedly by Sierra Unida Revolucionaria (Revolutionary United Sierra), an alleged arm of Los Rojos (The Reds).

These seven murders were only half of the total killings reported last week in Iguala, and when added to the kidnapping of the 43 students, represent only a small percentage of the escalating violence in Mexico that goes largely unreported in American-based English-language media.

Photo of street scene in Iguala: [Nickchulo](#)



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