



Written by [Kelly Holt](#) on October 21, 2010

Woman Beheaded, Texas National Guardsman Killed in Mexican Drug Wars

Ciudad Juarez, the Mexican city across the border from El Paso, Texas, was the site Wednesday of four deaths attributed to the savage and escalating drug wars. In one case, a woman was beheaded — marking the first such death in the turbulent city in the Mexican state of Chihuahua. In a separate incident, another victim was identified as 21-year-old Texas National Guardsman José Gil Hernandez Ramirez of El Paso.



According to Fox News Latino, [beheadings](#) are not uncommon in the drug war, but the death of this woman was the first known in Chihuahua.

Newstraitstimes today reports that the woman's head was found in a garbage bag next to the body, along with a message card. The article noted that "Feuding drug gangs often use spectacular, gruesome killings to send messages to each other, amid a wave of violence that has left more than 28,000 dead since 2006, according to official figures."

The report also noted that three decapitated bodies were found last week in Tijuana, across the border from San Diego, hung by their feet from bridges.

Fox claims women make up more than 10 percent of the people slain in Juarez, and the article references an Internet video showing one Mexican woman being menaced by several armed men, and confessing to working for a rival drug cartel. She was later found dead.

The Texas National Guardsman killed Wednesday was one of three men shot in another incident. One of the men survived and was taken to a hospital. Details about the shooting are few, but Chihuahuan officials said the men were lying on the ground face up and had been shot multiple times.

Today's [El Paso Times](#) reports that Juarez residents found Ramirez and another man, Rafael Ramirez Reza, 42, dead in Colonia Revolución Mexicana, according to the Chihuahua state attorney general's office. The *Times* also noted that Chihuahuan officials said a crime scene unit had found 18 empty casings from .45- and .223-caliber guns.

Col. Bill Meehan, a spokesman for the Texas National Guard, said a statement was likely to be issued Thursday. "It's really going to be a law enforcement investigation [The FBI is investigating the Guardsman's death]. It's really not something that we are discussing at this time," he told [msnbc.com](#). He also said National Guardsmen are prohibited from going to Mexico, but the prohibition applies only to full-time staff and those on duty. The Guard advises all personnel to use extreme caution when entering Mexico. The article did not explain Ramirez's presence in Juarez.

Meehan continued, "We have been at war here since 2003 and unfortunately we are familiar with the concept of death. This person is a soldier, so we will do a full military funeral if that's the family's



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wishes. And then we will learn from this.”

The violence was not confined to Juarez on Wednesday, as gun battles erupted in several areas of the country’s northern region. According to the MSNBC report, parents rushed to remove children from schools, and factories kept workers inside for their own safety, telling later shiftworkers to stay home, and canceling night shifts.

Shootouts also occurred in several others areas of Mexico. Witnesses in Nuevo Laredo, across from the Texas town of Laredo, said gunmen forced people from cars, using their vehicles as blockades, and initiated four other shootings in the city. In Matamoros, across the border from Brownsville, Texas, a grenade was thrown at an army barracks. In Reynosa, across from McAllen, Texas, shootouts caused a huge traffic jam along the highway between Matamoros and Monterrey. In August, *The New American* reported that the [mayor](#) of Santiago was assassinated by drug lords and his body dumped near the city of Monterrey.

Juarez, once a pleasant leisure destination for Texans, has become one of the world’s deadliest cities. The *El Paso Times* article claims more than 6,700 people have been killed there in the last two years, 2,470 of them in 2010 — from gun battles, executions, carjackings and other forms of violence. Texas Attorney General Greg Abbott has observed that it is safer to walk the streets of Baghdad than those of Juarez.

Texans are livid and border residents frightened. *The New American* contacted the office of Texas Governor Rick Perry for comment on this and other border issues, but the call had not been returned at posting time.

Photo: Police inspect the bodies of 2 men that were shot dead in the northern border city of Ciudad Juarez, Mexico on Oct. 20, 2010. Authorities later identified one of the dead men as Jose Gil Hernandez Ramirez, 21, of El Paso, a Texas National Guardsman: AP Images



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