

# EL OBSERVADOR

## Drug Cartels Target Military

Brings change to enforcement strategy

(AP) -- Mexican drug cartels armed with powerful weapons and angered by a nationwide military crackdown are striking back, killing soldiers in bold, daily attacks that threaten the one force strong enough to take on the gangs.

The daily bloodshed includes an ambush in Apatzingan, Mexico that killed five soldiers this month, a severed head left with a defiant note outside a military barracks on Saturday and the slaying Monday of a top federal intelligence official who was shot in the face in his car outside his office in Mexico City.

Mexicans were particularly



Mexican army soldiers stand over a detained man after a gun battle that left four dead traffickers in the city of Apatzingan, Mexico. (AP photo)

shocked last week by televised images of kindergartners fleeing their school during a grenade-and-gun battle between traffickers and soldiers that lasted for nearly two hours in this small town in President Felipe Calderon's home state of Michoacan.

The unrelenting bloodshed has forced a change in strategy for Calderon, who sent more than 24,000 federal police and soldiers out in December to recapture territory from Michoacan's poppy-dotted mountains to the tourist-packed port of Acapulco. Now, to supplement the mas-

sive presence of soldiers and tanks in small towns, he's ordered the creation of an elite military special operations force capable of surgical strikes.

"We are not going to give in," Public Safety Secretary Genaro Garcia Luna said. "In the states where there is most violence, we will be right there to confront the phenomenon."

The drug trade is all-powerful in Mexico. Analysts estimate that cartels here make between \$10 billion and \$30 billion selling cocaine, heroin, marijuana and methamphetamine to the U.S. market, rivaling Mexico's revenues from oil exports and tourism. The gangs also make billions through robbery, kidnapping and extortion of businesses and would-be migrants.

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## Burns Adds Hispanic Voices to Series

(AP) -- Documentary maker Ken Burns said he will edit his upcoming PBS series about World War II to add stories about Hispanic soldiers after protests that they had been excluded.

A day after meeting with Hispanic advocacy groups, Burns



Ken Burns

said Thursday that he had collected interviews with Hispanic veterans that he considered powerful and would incorporate them, along with the veterans' personal documents.

"The War," a 14-hour series, is

scheduled to air in September. "The role of Hispanic-American veterans in WWII is one that lends itself to the universality of this film and merits being included in my film," Burns said in a statement. "It is adding another layer of storytelling that will only enrich what we already have."

Burns initially resisted changes to the completed

documentary. Last month, after protests by Hispanic groups, Burns brought aboard a Hispanic documentarian, Hector Galan, and said he would fold in stories of Hispanic veterans during breaks in the series or after the end of an installment.

Hispanic groups said that amounted to treating Hispanic veterans as an afterthought.

## Local Women of Color to Visit Guatemala

With labor rights delegation

Sisters in Action for Power and the Portland Central America Solidarity Committee are partnering to send two young women from Sisters in Action to participate in a women's labor rights delegation to Guatemala.

"This women's delegation will serve as a learning and movement building opportunity. We are eager to learn about the struggles women

face across border lines and identify ways to support organizations most like ours," said Terenie Faison, 23, executive director of Sisters in Action for Power.

All participants will have the opportunity to meet with local unions in Guatemala and attend a language school.

"It is important for us as organizers, especially women of color, to build and strengthen

relationships with other women in the work. The delegation will expose us to the struggles of labor union organizing and provide the opportunity for us to share our challenges and inspire each other to continue the work in solidarity," Chirece Jones, 20, organizer, Sisters in Action for Power.

Sisters in Action for Power is a community based, multi-racial, multi-issue, intergenerational grassroots organization dedicated to building the leadership organizing and critical

thinking skills of young girls of color ages 10-18 in north and northeast Portland.

For the past 11 years Sisters in Action has been committed to making changes in public institutions to promote racial, economic and gender equity.

Founded in 1979, the Portland Central America Solidarity Committee educates and mobilizes community members, workers students around struggles for human rights and social justice in the Americas.

## New Hummingbird Discovered in Colombia

(AP) -- There's a new chirp in the forest but it may be choked by the slashing and burning of trees by coca farmers, researchers said.

The Gorgeted Puffleg, a rare hummingbird that boasts a plumage of violet blue and iridescent green on its throat, has been discovered living in the cloud forests of southwestern Colombia, researchers announced.

The species — known by its scientific name *Eriocnemis isabellae* belongs to the Puffleg genus, which appear to have "little cotton balls above their legs," said Luis Mazariegos-Hurtado, who has spent 30 years documenting hummingbirds and founded the Colombian Hummingbird Conservancy.



A new species of hummingbird, called the Gorgeted Puffleg *Eriocnemis isabellae*, has been discovered in the mountains of southwest Colombia. (AP photo)

## Have you seen me?

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DANETTE SARAH THOMAS  
Current Age: 7 1/2

Date Missing: March 11, 2007

Missing From: Covington, GA

Danette and Taylor were last seen on March 11, 2007.

They may be in the company of their non-custodial mother and an unknown adult male.

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