

Afghan policeman kills 6 US soldiers

London Six US soldiers were killed by an Afghan policeman during a training exercise in the latest attack by local security on Western forces (Tom Coghlan writes).

The incident, which took place in Nangarhar province, brings to 668 the number of Western troops killed in Afghanistan this year, including a growing number killed by supposed members of the Afghan security forces.

Egypt vote 'fraud'

Cairo Opposition parties and international organisations accused Egypt of massive fraud in parliamentary elections at the weekend. Early results indicate a large-scale victory for President Mubarak's ruling party.

100 children hurt

Beijing One hundred children were hurt, seven seriously, when some of them tripped while running down stairs at a school in western China, causing a stampede. They were running to exercises in the playground.

Russian TV rebels

Moscow A Russian TV journalist has openly criticised his employer for censoring his comments about the mistreatment of prisoners. Another broadcaster earlier denounced state control at an awards ceremony.

Air freight plans

Brussels EU interior ministers will be given plans to tighten air freight security, including better co-ordination of intelligence, when they meet on Thursday after the discovery last month of two parcel bombs.

Odd-job 'killer'

Rome A Sicilian village odd-job man shot dead at least five clients who failed to pay him, a prosecutor said. Giuseppe Raeli, 69, is accused of five counts of murder and four of attempted murder from 1997 to 2004. (AFP)

Aziz sentenced

Baghdad Tariq Aziz, 74, Saddam Hussein's Foreign Minister, was jailed for ten years for terrorising Shia Kurds during the Iran-Iraq war. Aziz is still waiting to hear whether President Talabani will commute his death sentence. (AP)

Gem fetches £15m

Hong Kong A 14.2-carat diamond dubbed "the Perfect Pink" set an Asian record when it sold for \$23 million (£15 million) at Christie's in Hong Kong. The auction house called the stone a "phenomenon in the gem world". (AFP)



Police say that Arturo Gallegos Castellón, centre, believed to be the leader of the Aztecas gang, is behind the spate of killings. Guns and drugs were seized with him

'Gang boss behind drug war murders' is seized by police

Mexico
Girish Gupta Mexico City

Mexican authorities have arrested the man who they claim is behind the majority of murders in the notorious border city of Ciudad Juárez over the past 15 months.

Arturo Gallegos Castellón, 32, nicknamed El Farmero (the Farmer), is believed to be the leader of the Aztecas gang.

The group act as footsoldiers for the Juárez drug cartel in their turf war against the Sinaloa cartel, as both wrestle for control of the lucrative border city.

"[Mr Gallegos] is in charge of the whole organisation of the Aztecas in Ciudad Juárez," Luis Cárdenas Palomino, the federal police chief, said. "All of the instructions for the murders committed in Ciudad Juárez pass through him."

Mexican police often claim that those arrested have made various confessions. These are not easy to verify. They allege that Mr Gallegos admitted responsibility for "80 per cent of all homicides" in Ciudad Juárez since August 2009, including ordering the killing of a US consular official.

Lesley Enriquez Redelfs, a pregnant US consulate official, was killed in March alongside her husband for providing visas to a rival gang, according to investigators. Their seven-month-old daughter, who was in the back of their car, survived. President Obama vowed to "work tirelessly" to prosecute those involved.

Mr Gallegos has also been linked with an attack in January in which 15 people, mainly students, were killed at a birthday party in the Villas del Salvador district of the city. Gunmen had false information that guests were members of the rival Artistic Assassins gang, who work for the Sinaloa cartel.

The killings left the city in shock and

psychologists were brought in to work with traumatised children. President Calderón visited the area, keen to show that his Government was committed to ending the violence.

Two associates of Mr Gallegos have also been arrested for smuggling weapons and drugs across the border into the US. Carlos Rodríguez Ramírez, nicknamed El 67, and Gisela Ornelas Nuñez, also known as La Maestra (the Master), were captured along with weapons, ammunition and marijuana.

The arrests represent a coup for Mexican authorities, as they attempt to demonstrate that they are making gains

Fatal toll

- At least 28,300 people have been killed since the President started his war on drugs in December 2006
 - 58 journalists and more than 1,000 police officers, judges and prosecutors have been killed
 - 121,199 cartel members have been detained
- Sources: El Universal; Times database

in their war against drug cartels in time for a visit to the country by Janet Napolitano, the US Homeland Security Secretary, today. She is due to meet her Mexican counterparts to discuss the Obama Administration's commitment to combating terrorism.

This month two drug tunnels were discovered under the border between Tijuana, in Mexico, and San Diego, in California. One discovered last week was nearly half a mile long with an electricity supply and railway line.

More than 6,500 people have died in drug-related violence in Ciudad Juárez over the past two years, making it one of the deadliest cities in the world. More than 30,000 people have been killed in Mexico in the conflicts since Mr Calderón took office in December 2006.

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