



Home News Schools Sports Biz Opinion Health Scitech Arts Dining Movies Outdoors Weather Arc



NM Jobs Cars Real Estate



Se

7:50am -- Cartel Drug War Spreads to Cyberspace



By Bruce Daniels - ABQnewsSeeker

Wednesday, 28 May 2008 00:52

Last week's e-mail warning of Juarez 'bloodbath' just part of Internet battlefield.

Mexican drug cartels warring for dominance in Ciudad Juarez and all across northern Mexico have taken their struggle to a new battlefield -- the Internet, the [El Paso Times](#) reported.

In addition to last week's anonymous e-mail warning of the "bloodiest and deadliest" weekend yet in Juarez, the Internet is crackling with videos showing supposed "confessions" of captured hit men, allegations of corruption by government officials, and even outing the mysterious leader of the Juarez drug cartel in the state of Chihuahua, the Times reported.

Mexican drug traffickers and others have posted videos online for years, often accompanied by narcocorridos, taunting rivals, bragging and paying homage to drug kingpins, according to the Times.

But more recently other videos have been popping up that claim to identify corrupt police and government officials in Juarez and the state of Chihuahua, the paper said.

One site lists the names of police supervisors who are allegedly paid \$5,000 a month to look the other way and ends by telling Chihuahua residents to protect themselves, saying "La policia no existe" ("The police don't exist.").

Some of the videos link to Web forums that are filled with curse-laden arguments and threats claiming the superiority of one gang over another, the Times reported.

"All that stuff is mostly propaganda," El Paso DEA spokesman Matthew Taylor told the Times. "The DEA doesn't have an opinion one way or the other on what's on the Internet."

Agent Andrea Simmons, spokeswoman for the FBI in El Paso, told the Times that the posting of videos by Mexican drug traffickers is part of a trend that includes criminal groups in the United States and that law enforcement is watching.

"We try to use any kind of tool that is publicly available to our advantage. Nationwide, we have seen groups like gangs post information about themselves online," said Simmons, who added that the FBI is not investigating the killings in Juarez.

Members of street gangs -- including those in El Paso -- can be seen posing with guns, throwing hand signs and boasting on their personal Web pages, such as MySpace.com, the Times reported.

Meanwhile, two men were found dead Tuesday evening on the outskirts of Juarez along with a sign stating that executions of people linked to a particular drug trafficker would continue, according to the Times.

That brought the confirmed death toll in and around Juarez to 24, including two police officers, since Friday.

El Paso television station [KVIA](#) has reported that a joint security operation arrested more than 550 people in Juarez last weekend, and that city Mayor Jose Reyes Ferriz said authorities will continue to monitor every major thoroughfare to prevent innocent pedestrians from being caught in the cross-fire.

< Prev

Next >

Last Updated (Wednesday, 28 May 2008 01:15)