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14 die in Juárez massacre

14 others hurt in attack at party
 By Diana Washington Valdez / El Paso Times
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Relatives of one of the slain teens mourn their loss Sunday in Ciudad Juarez, Mexico. Unknown gunmen a day earlier stormed a gathering of students, killing at least 13 and injuring dozens in Ciudad Juarez, Mexico, Sunday Jan. 31, 2010. (Jesus Alcazar / AFP/Getty Images)

Gunmen shot and killed fourteen people and wounded 14 others in an appalling attack at a birthday party Saturday night in Juárez.

The victims ranged in age from 13 to 42, eight of whom were students. They were shot by 15 gunmen with 9 mm handguns, .40-caliber handguns and .223-caliber weapons, normally associated with assault rifles, officials said.

Photographs taken by media outlets showed a ghastly scene with large amounts of blood on the floor of a home, blood splattered on walls and footprints of blood left by soldiers or investigators.

Authorities said 10 people died at the scene and four at a hospital. The other victims were being treated for their wounds.

Juárez, which has been involved in a bloody drug war since January 2008, has had several multiple-slaying shootings. In September, two drug rehabilitation centers were attacked -- 18 were killed in one and 10 were killed in the other massacre.

The latest moved officials into action.

Mexican authorities announced a reward of a million pesos -- about \$76,000 in dollars -- for information leading to the arrest of the people who committed the latest mass killing.

Chihuahua state Attorney General Patricia Gonzalez and Juárez Mayor Jose Reyes Ferriz called a news conference Sunday to condemn the murders at a southeastern Juárez neighborhood.

Gonzalez said city, state and federal law enforcement officers

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were collaborating in the investigation. She said they did not know what led to the attack.

At the news conference, officials said the youngest victim was 13-year-old Yomira Aurora Delgado Lara, one of eight students who were slain that night. Two of the male victims had not been identified.

Most of the students attended the CBTIS 128 and Bachilleres 9 campuses. CBTIS was founded 30 years ago to help train professionals and technicians for jobs in the maquiladora industry.

Witnesses said several armed men in four vehicles showed up Saturday night at a house on Vista del Portal, where the party was in progress. The assailants separated the males and females before they began mowing them down.

The killers used their vehicles to block the street at both ends and chased several people who tried to escape. The victims reportedly were celebrating a school soccer championship and the birthday of one of their friends.

When police arrived at the scene, they found bodies scattered across three properties on Vista del Portal. Neighbors who became aware of what happened rushed the injured to clinics, and washed away several pools of blood.

In the other multiple slayings, suspects arrested in the cases led authorities to believe that the killings at the rehabilitation centers were directly connected to the drug war between the Juárez and Sinaloa drug cartels.

On Sept. 2, 2009, 18 men at the Casa Aliviane rehabilitation center were gunned down and on Sept. 15, 2009, 10 people at the Nexa Vida rehab center were killed in similar fashion. Smaller groups of people have been shot to death in nightclubs, restaurants and motels in Juárez.

Although authorities did not suggest a link between the latest multiple slayings to the drug violence that has claimed about 4,400 lives since 2008, officials have said warring drug cartels are responsible for most of the deaths.

On Sunday, the National Latino Congreso, which met for three days in El Paso, passed a resolution to join with the El Paso City Council to call for immediate action to end the violence in Juárez.

El Paso city Rep. Beto O'Rourke said the latest massacre "underscores that Juárez does not need our sympathy -- Juárez needs action. This was another day we have allowed these events to continue."

"The prevailing drug-prohibition policy is literally killing the people of Juárez."

O'Rourke said the violence across the border affects El Paso, while the violence nationwide in Mexico affects the United States.

Chihuahua state governor candidates Pablo Cuaron (National Action Party) and Cesar Duarte (Institutional Revolutionary Party) issued statements repudiating the murders.

The other victims authorities identified Sunday were Jesus Armando Segovia Ortiz, 15, student; Brenda Ivonne Escamilla Pedroza, 17, student; Rodrigo Cadena Davila, 17, student; Jose Adrian Encina Hernandez, 17, student; Carlos Lucio Moreno Avila, 18, student.

Also, Horacio Alberto Soto Camargo, 19, student; Jose Luis Aguilar Camargo, 19, college student; Edgar Martin Diaz Macias, 23, unemployed; Eduardo Becerra, 35, worker; Jesus Enriquez Miramontes, 39, worker; and Jaime Rosale Cisneros, 42, contractor.

The reward is offered through the Crime Stoppers 800-220-8477 telephone line the Juárez city government set up for people to provide tips confidentially.

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Illustration of where the gunmen killed the 13 victims at a party in Juárez. (Photo courtesy of the Procuraduría General de Justicia del Estado de Chihuahua)

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