



Jalisco Cartel's Rise Exposes Limits of Mexico's Security Strategy

Benoît Gomis | Thursday, May 28, 2015

On May 1, the first day of a military-led operation meant to restore peace in a region wracked by recent drug-related violence, Mexico's western state of Jalisco suffered one of the deadliest days in its recent history. Across the region, a bold new criminal gang known as the Jalisco New Generation Cartel reportedly shot down a military

helicopter with a rocket-propelled grenade, set 11 banks and 19 gas stations on fire and used flaming vehicles to put up at least 39 roadblocks. The attacks, apparently carried out by the group to prevent the capture of its leader, killed 15 people, including 6 soldiers and a government official. They came just over three weeks after the cartel, known by its Spanish acronym CNJG, ambushed a police convoy on a country road, killing 15 police officers and injuring five more. In March, the CNJG had killed five federal police officers.

The CNJG emerged in 2010 from two older outfits, the Milenio gang and a branch of the Sinaloa cartel. Last month, the U.S. Department of the Treasury added the organization and its current leader, Nemesio Oseguera Cervantes (or "El Mencho"), along with his brother-in-law Abigael Gonzalez Valencia—leader of Los Cuinis, another cartel—to its so-called kingpin list of wanted drug traffickers. ...



Mexican state police stand guard near the entrance of Rancho del Sol, near Vista Hermosa, Mexico, May 22, 2015 (AP photo by Refugio Ruiz).



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