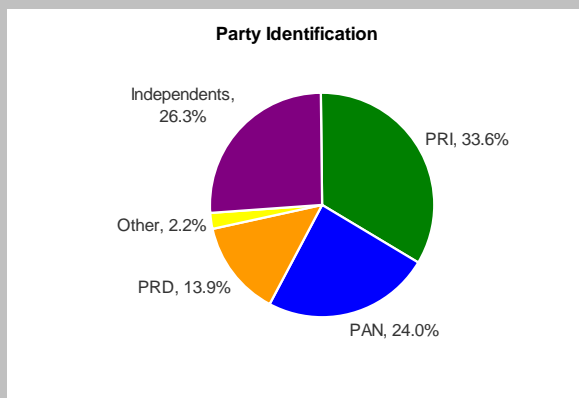
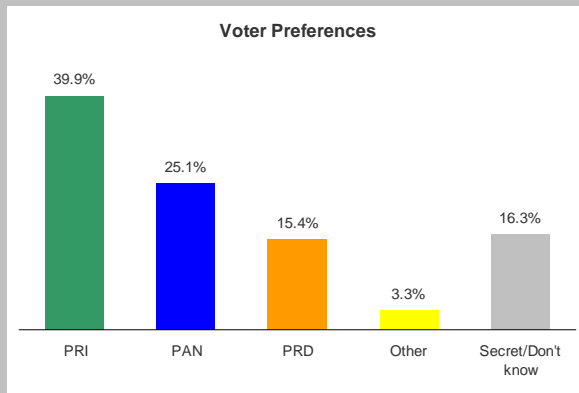


Alan Stoga, President
Daniel Wilson, Managing Director and editor

Polls

PRI opens strong lead in congressional race

A national survey in *El Universal* (2/9) gives the PRI a 15% lead over the PAN in voter preferences for the July congressional election, while the PRD has sunk to a distant third place. Independent voters (26% of the sample) are inclining to the PRI, though 41% of independents are still undecided. Analysts estimate that if the PRI gets more than 42.2% of the national vote, they could get an absolute majority in the Chamber, which has not occurred 1994.



Key Dates

- 1/31-3/11:** Federal 'pre-campaign' period
- 3/14-29:** Major parties select candidates for Congress
- 4/6:** Start of state election campaigns *
- 4/30:** End of regular Congressional session

- 4/29-5/2:** Deadline for registering candidates for Chamber of Deputies
- 5/5:** Start of federal election campaigns
- 7/5:** National congressional, 6 gubernatorial, and 5 other local elections.

* May vary by state

Broadcasters challenge IFE on political ads

The Federal Electoral Institute (IFE) has started an investigation of **Televisa**, **TV Azteca**, and satellite broadcaster **SKY** to determine if the manner in which they started broadcasting political ads for the 'precampaign' season violated the electoral law. The broadcasters generated howls from viewers when they interrupted soccer games and soap operas with long blocs of political ads that they are obliged to carry, rather than spreading them out among normal advertising. The IFE board will meet this coming Friday to vote on possible sanctions. As columnist Ricardo Alemán noted, "Everyone knows that the [broadcasters' action] was a provocation with strong political content. ... The broadcasters are measuring forces with the parties, and they are demonstrating that the IFE is an authority without the slightest authority." (Universal 2/5,7)

PRI and PAN pick candidates for Nuevo León governor

The PAN Central Committee designated Senator (and former interim governor) **Fernando Elizondo Barragán** as their candidate for governor of Nuevo León, bypassing the normal practice of having party members vote. Ramón Alberto Garza, the editor of *Reporte Indigo*, blasted the selection as a return to the old practice of the "dedazo," or the direct designation of candidates by the President. The head of legal affairs for the PAN Central Committee defended its decision to bypass an internal election as necessary to maintain the "unity" of the party and justified by the overarching goal of winning back the governorship of the state. The PRI also directly designated the little-known **Rodrigo Medina** as their candidate. The PRD is not a factor in Nuevo León. (Reforma 2/8, Reporte Indigo 2/6)

Army general kidnapped and murdered

Retired army general **Mauro Enrique Tello Quiñónez** was found murdered along with two others on a highway outside Cancún. Authorities said that Tello had been shot 11 times and the corpse showed signs of torture. General Tello, who had been the commander of the 21st military region in Michoacán, had just retired from active duty and started a job to create an elite police unit in Cancún, working for the PRD mayor, **Gregorio Sánchez**. The federal Justice Ministry has taken over the investigation of the murder. (Reforma 2/3-7, Universal 2/4)

Communications Undersecretary quits

Purificación Carpinteyro resigned her post as Undersecretary for Communications, only four months after being picked by President Calderón for the job. The day after the SCT issued a press release saying she was leaving for "personal reasons," Carpinteyro released a public letter that said she had "irreconcilable differences" with SCT head **Luis Téllez**, and that they "had become an obstacle for taking the necessary actions for the development of the sector." In an interview she also said that she regretted that the ministry was not going to move forward with the auctions of more radio spectrum or the rights to develop a new internet backbone to compete with Telmex's. (Reforma 2/3-4)