

World watches as Mexican people vote

By Bill Cormier

The Associated Press

MEXICO CITY — Mexicans lined up to vote Sunday, wary about fraud but with high hopes of choosing a new president and lawmakers in clean elections. In the south, Mayan Indians trekked through mountains to reach the polls.

The elections come during a tumultuous year that began with an Indian rebellion and included the assassination of presidential candidate Luis Donaldo Colosio in Tijuana four months later.

The vote — which could be Mexico's most competitive ever — has become a test of the country's resolve to match the bold economic reforms of this year's North American Free Trade Agreement with political reform.

Three candidates were leading in the race for the presidency. Ernesto Zedillo represents the Institutional Revolutionary Party, or PRI, which has ruled Mexico for 65 years. He is strongly challenged by Diego Fernandez de Cevallos of the conservative National Action Party and Cuauhtemoc Cardenas of the leftist Democratic Revolution Party.

President Carlos Salinas de Gortari, who is credited with raising Mexico's international

stature and reducing its foreign debt, is constitutionally barred from seeking a second consecutive six-year term.

Fed up with corruption and election fraud, Mexicans are scrutinizing the election of their next leadership. The United States, Canada, Western Europe and Mexico's other new free-trade partners also are watching, along with 82,000 Mexican and foreign observers.

Some polling stations in the capital opened late. But no incidents were reported. Some places had lines a block long outside.

Part of the reason for the long lines was the process of checking and marking the new Mexican voter identification cards, issued to prevent fraud. Also, each voter's finger was marked with an indelible yellow ink.

"I don't like the ink. It'll last for five days," complained Consuelo Gonzalez. "But it does show I'm a complete citizen."

About 45.7 million people were registered to vote. A total of nine presidential candidates, including two women, were in the race to replace Salinas on Dec. 1.

Mexicans also were electing a 500-member Chamber of Deputies and two-thirds of a 128-seat Senate.

The southern state of Chiapas, where the

Indian rebellion still smolders, was electing a governor, legislator and local authorities.

Salinas promised the cleanest vote ever in a country with a tradition of fraud-marred elections, and \$730 million was spent to overhaul voter rolls and issue voter identification cards with photographs. A special deputy attorney general was named to prosecute election-related fraud.

Zedillo, a Yale-educated economist who had never run for elected office, was nominated late in the campaign to take the place of the PRI's slain candidate, Colosio.

The Zapatista National Liberation Army, which led the Chiapas state rebellion in January, withdrew its troops from around Chiapas polling sites last week, saying it would allow an unimpeded vote. The guerrillas have refused to lay down their arms until their demands for electoral and other political reforms are met.

More than 145 people were killed in fighting between rebel and government troops before a cease-fire was declared Jan. 12.

The Zapatista rebels have ordered their troops not to take any action in the event of fraud without first allowing civil society to protest peacefully.

NEWS IN A MINUTE

Elephants rampage

HONOLULU — A rampaging circus elephant killed a trainer and injured another before it was shot down in the streets. It was the second elephant attack in a week at Circus International.

The 21-year-old African elephant named Tyk went berserk just before she was to perform with four other elephants in Saturday's matinee.

On Monday night, an elephant rammed a fence around the ring, knocking Sean Floyd into the next row and pinning his wife and eight children under the fence, Floyd said. None of the Floyds required hospitalization.

Gore hospitalized

WASHINGTON — Vice President Al Gore, once dubbed a "raging bull" on the court, will be on crutches for a few weeks recovering from a basketball injury that required surgery on his Achilles' tendon, an aide said Sunday.

"Everything looks fine," Heidi Kukis said the morning after Gore was admitted to Bethesda Naval Hospital. She said the vice president would stay a second night rather than go home late Sunday.

Gore, 46, is expected to resume his normal schedule after his discharge Monday, despite a splint and the crutches, Kukis said.

Sinking stars

LOS ANGELES — One of the hundreds of stars on the Hollywood Walk of Fame — actor John Forsythe's — buckled when subway work going on underneath Hollywood Boulevard caused the street to start sinking on Saturday. Police diverted traffic around a four-block area of the street Sunday while crews used jackhammers to remove 27 threatened stars, including those of Forsythe, Carol Burnett, Eddie Albert, Melissa Gilbert, Jim Nabors and Fred MacMurray.

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority said a combination of tunneling and water seepage from an unknown source caused the street to start sinking. That caused the stone in which Forsythe's star is embedded to bend and crack as the sidewalk containing it bulged.

Relentless refugees

KEY WEST, Fla. — Despite restrictions newly imposed on Cuban refugees by the United States, many Cubans were still ready to brave the 90-mile crossing to Florida on a few wooden planks, lashed by telephone cords to inflated inner tubes.

Some said they hadn't heard about the new U.S. restrictions. Others said they didn't care.

Cubans who didn't hear about Clinton's measures on short wave radio Saturday read about them Sunday in the state newspaper, Rebel Youth.

Volunteer pilots helping search for people at sea said the Coast Guard couldn't reach all the rafters making the 90-mile voyage.

On Saturday, the Coast Guard had its biggest day since the 1980 Mariel boat lift, picking up 1,189 refugees. On Sunday, 678 had been picked up by early evening.

African groups confront AIDS

By Amba Dadson

The Associated Press

ABIDJAN, Ivory Coast — When Juliana Gbami's husband died three years ago, doctors told her the cause was kidney failure. Just kidney failure.

Three months later, when she developed recurring fevers, diarrhea and chronic fatigue, they said it had really been AIDS, and that she had it too.

"That's when I collapsed and really fell ill," said Gbami, a retired Ivorian social worker.

Even as AIDS consumes their continent, many Africans can't bring themselves to mention it. Experts say that's one reason the disease is spreading.

Africa accounts for 10 million of the world's 16 million cases of infection with HIV, the virus that causes AIDS, according to the World Health Organization.

Gbami belongs to something almost unheard of in Africa: an AIDS support group dedicated to breaking the fatal taboo of silence.

"It started very, very tentatively," said Dr. Marc Aquirre, an American working at the Medical and Social Assistance Center, financed by the Church of Christ. "A lot of these people are very reticent. But we basically had a party and got people talking about themselves."

Experts say cultural modesty and a deep reluctance to be the bearer of bad news are powerful social forces in Africa, even among some doctors.

"Africans with AIDS do not go and see their doctors because of our traditional sense of modesty and shame," said Yaya Diallo, a Senegalese sociologist at the University of Dakar. "They prefer to leave it to God to decide their fate, and try traditional medicine."

The support group called "The Friends Club," which began meeting weekly in July, represents a quiet revolution that has evened some people to become crusaders for community awareness.

"I want to tell people that, with HIV, you can still live," said Etienne Tapie, 28, who was diagnosed in March as HIV positive. "It is not the end of the world."

Not at The Friends Club, which Tapie helped organize. Club meetings, which draw 35 to 40 people, are lively, positive and animated. They include a pretty teenage girl, the soft-spoken Gbami, a lanky father of four.

"There's such a need for people to open up and talk to someone," said Aquirre, the American doctor. "That is all we aim to provide, really." The Ivory Coast, with 18,670 documented AIDS cases in a population of 13 million, is West Africa's most-affected country.

Leaders condemn conference

By Eileen Alt Powell

The Associated Press

CAIRO, Egypt — Muslim fundamentalists have stepped up their campaign against next month's U.N. population conference in Cairo, charging that it will encourage homosexuality, premarital sex and abortion.

Islamic lawyers are seeking a court order this week to block the meeting, and a Jordanian federation has urged that Egypt cancel it outright or risk "turmoil and public anger."

The pro-Islamic Al-Ahram newspaper carried a front-page headline Sunday characterizing the conference as "consolidating American dominance" over family values and urged readers to mail in their objections.

The hard-liners are not expected to scuttle the Sept. 5-13 meeting, which planners say will draw more than 15,000 people from throughout the world.

But the Muslim stance, along with the Vatican's offensive against artificial birth control, has organizers worried that the conference's main point — controlling population growth — will be lost. Pope John Paul II has urged Roman Catholics to rally against contraception and abortion. Earlier this month, about 200,000 Roman Catholics took to the streets of the Philippine capital Manila in a protest march.

President Hosni Mubarak has tried to assure all sides that no nation will be forced to accept anything that contradicts religious beliefs or traditions.

"Those who protest some items on the conference agenda basically forget the conference's ultimate objective — to curb overpopulation and link population growth levels to development," Mubarak told a weekend meeting of

— 66 —
Those who protest some items on the conference agenda basically forget the conference's ultimate objective—to curb overpopulation and link population growth levels to development.

—Hosni Mubarak
Egyptian president

— 99 —
Islamic scholars. The International Conference on Population and Development, as it is officially called, will seek consensus on how to deal with the world's population as well as hunger and poverty. The goal is to hold world population to about 7.27 billion by 2015, compared with the current 5.7 billion. Left unchecked, the U.N. says, world population will reach 7.92 billion by 2015 and 12.5 billion by 2050, with much of the growth in underdeveloped countries that can ill afford to cope. The powerful Al-Azhar, the Cairo-based center of Islamic scholarship for the Arab world, said in a statement earlier this month that the draft agenda "is full of loose expressions" that appear to contradict Islamic principles.

It found three points most offensive: a mention of "plurality of forms" for families, as accepting of homosexuality; a call for making sexual advice available to all, as counter to Islam's ban on extramarital sex; and references to safe abortion, which Islam accepts only if the mother's life is in danger.

Archeology crew discovers tools of ancient civilization

CUSTER, S.D. — Workers at an archaeological site west of here have uncovered some of the oldest artifacts in the United States.

Preliminary results from the Jim Pitts site indicate the finds are from 10,500 to 11,300 years ago, workers at the dig said.

The dig started in 1991 as part of a construction project for U.S. Highway 16 between Custer and Newcastle, Wyo. Artifacts found during an initial survey led to more digs in the following years.

Last summer, workers discovered lance points, which were dated at 9,000 and 11,000 years old by University of Wyoming archaeologist George Frison. That puts them in the Clovis era of paleoindians who hunted woolly mammoths and were the first known residents of what is now the United States.

This year, volunteers are helping sift through tons of dirt at the site for clues to the area's history. The workers are searching 165 tons of dirt that was put in plastic bags and taken to the State Archaeological Research Center's office

in Rapid City last summer.

The process, called water screening, involves dumping the dirt onto a metal screen suspended over a tank, then spraying water on the dirt and shaking the mess so that any debris shows through. Workers using this process found artifacts dating from more than 11,000 years ago to the present.

Bruce Potter, the head of the archaeological crew, said his favorite discovery this summer is a paleoindian projectile point from an area where no one expected to find anything.

"There's always something in the screen," Potter said. After the remaining 5,000 bags of dirt are screened, archaeologists will study the soil to determine environmental conditions at the time the artifacts were made.

The information gleaned from the Pitts site probably will be published in a scientific book and displayed at the planned Spirit of the Black Hills Museum, officials said. "But we haven't really finished excavating until we get through those bags," said Ned Hanenberger, field director of the dig.

Daily Nebraskan

Editor Jeff Zelony, 472-1766
Managing Editor Angie Brunkow
Assoc. News Editors Jeffrey Robb
Rainbow Rowell
General Manager Dan Shattil
Production Manager Katherine Policky
Advertising Manager Amy Struthers
Senior Acct. Exec. Sheri Krajewski
Publications Board Chairman Tim Hagedgaard, 436-9258
Professional Adviser Don Walton, 473-7301
FAX NUMBER 472-1761
The Daily Nebraskan (USPS 144-080) is published by the UNL Publications Board, Nebraska Union 34, 1400 R St., Lincoln, NE 68588-0448, Monday through Friday during the academic year, weekly during summer sessions.
Readers are encouraged to submit story ideas and comments to the Daily Nebraskan by phoning 472-1763 between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. The public also has access to the Publications Board. For information, contact Tim Hagedgaard, 436-9258.
Subscription price is \$50 for one year.
Postmaster: Send address changes to the Daily Nebraskan, Nebraska Union 34, 1400 R St., Lincoln, NE 68588-0448. Second-class postage paid at Lincoln, NE.
ALL MATERIAL COPYRIGHT
1994 DAILY NEBRASKAN