

= Miguel Treviño Morales =

Miguel Ángel Treviño Morales (born 18 November 1970) , commonly referred to by his alias Z @-@ 40 , is a former Mexican drug lord and leader of the criminal organization known as Los Zetas . Considered a violent and dangerous criminal , he was one of Mexico 's most @-@ wanted drug lords until his arrest in July 2013 .

Born into a family with six brothers and six sisters , Treviño Morales began his criminal career as a teenager , working for Los Tejas ? a local gang from his hometown of Nuevo Laredo , Tamaulipas . His fluent English and experience of moving contraband along the U.S. ? Mexico border enabled him to be recruited in the late 1990s by the drug lord Osiel Cárdenas Guillén , who headed the Gulf Cartel and Los Zetas . Around 2005 , he was appointed as the regional boss of Los Zetas in Nuevo Laredo and was given the task to fight off the forces of the Sinaloa Cartel , which was attempting to take over the lucrative drug trafficking routes to the United States . After successfully securing these routes in Nuevo Laredo in 2006 , Treviño Morales was moved to Veracruz and appointed as the Zetas leader in the state after the death of the drug lord Efraín Teodoro Torres . Two years later , his boss Heriberto Lazcano Lazcano sent him to Guatemala to wipe out his competitors ; after completing the task successfully , he appointed Treviño Morales as the national commander of Los Zetas in 2008 . In 2010 , Los Zetas gained their independence from the Gulf Cartel , their former allies , and both organizations went to war with each other .

As the national commander of Los Zetas , Treviño Morales earned a notorious reputation for intimidating officials and citizens throughout Mexico . The Mexican authorities believe that he is responsible for a significant part of the violence in Mexico , including the murder of 72 migrants in 2010 and the massacre of 193 people in 2011 . A common torture method of his was known as guiso (stew) , in which victims would be dumped into oil barrels , doused with gasoline and burned alive . Following the death of his boss Lazcano Lazcano in October 2012 , Treviño Morales became his successor and the top leader of Los Zetas drug cartel amid an internal power struggle within the organization .

Mexican Marines arrested Treviño Morales on 15 July 2013 in the state of Nuevo León without a single bullet being fired . At the time of his capture , the Mexican government was offering up to a 30 million pesos (US \$ 2 @. @ 3 million) reward for information leading to his arrest . The United States Department of State was offering up to US \$ 5 million for information leading to his arrest and conviction . Authorities on both sides of the border believe that he was succeeded by his younger brother Omar Treviño Morales , a man who was also on the most @-@ wanted list .

= = Early life = =

Miguel Ángel Treviño Morales was born on 18 November 1970 in Nuevo Laredo , Tamaulipas , Mexico . His parents , Rodolfo Treviño and María Arcelia Morales , created a large family with six daughters and seven sons , including Miguel . Like many families along the U.S.-Mexico border , the Treviño family travelled from Mexico to the United States and vice versa , where they bought properties and opened several businesses . His father abandoned his family at a very young age , forcing Treviño Morales to single @-@ handedly raise the whole family . Treviño Morales grew up in a lower @-@ class neighborhood in Nuevo Laredo , but as a teenager , he worked for the wealthy by fixing their yards and washing their cars . He also did chores for the local drug lord Héctor Manuel Saucedo Gamboa (alias El Karis) , who later became his mentor ; Treviño Morales eventually replaced him as a Zetas leader in Nuevo Laredo . Treviño Morales grew up disliking Mexico 's class disparity and developed so much resentment as to partially explain his violent behavior as an adult . Treviño Morales frequented Dallas , Texas with his family . In 1993 , he was apprehended in Dallas County and charged with avoiding police arrest , after he had tried to lose the cops in a police car chase that ended in a street dead end . He paid a \$ 672 @-@ dollar fine and was subsequently released from the county prison . Few details are known of Treviño Morales 's life in Dallas ; the U.S. authorities believe he learned about " power , money , weapons and the vast consumer market for illegal drugs " while living in Texas . They also believe that he perceived an

anti @-@ Mexican bias among Americans , and especially towards Mexican immigrants like him . However , Treviño Morales considered Dallas his home because of his large family network that lives in the surrounding areas . According to U.S. investigators , he was last seen in the Dallas area in 2005 after entering the United States illegally , where visited his family and was said to have been at a strip club .

= = Criminal origins and ascension = =

As a teenager , he began to work for Los Tejas , a gang that ran the criminal activities in his hometown of Nuevo Laredo . From washing cars , running errands , and stealing car parts in Nuevo Laredo , Treviño Morales turned to the drug trade , starting with small @-@ scale drug retail sales and smuggling . Unlike the first members of Los Zetas , he was never in the military . He was hired by them and the Gulf Cartel in the late 1990s for his experience moving contraband across the border . His fluent English and his criminal contacts on both sides of the U.S.-Mexico border allowed him to gain the trust of the then @-@ leader of the Gulf Cartel , Osiel Cárdenas Guillén . When he joined the Gulf Cartel and Los Zetas , Los Tejas , the local gang he once worked for , was absorbed by the former groups . Around 2005 , Treviño Morales became the regional boss of Nuevo Laredo ; he was in charge of fighting off the incursions of the Sinaloa Cartel , which was attempting to take control of the smuggling routes in the area . The Laredo ? Nuevo Laredo area is a lucrative smuggling route for narcotics because of the Interstate 35 highway , which serves as a strategic pathway to San Antonio , Austin , and Dallas for future drug distribution . While in power , he orchestrated a number of assassinations in American cities and in Mexico by young U.S. citizens whom he put on his payroll . Treviño Morales was good at identifying and grooming young teenagers who he believed had the potential to become professional assassins for Los Zetas . These recruits , sometimes called Zetitas (" Little Zetas ") , usually joined organized crime as young as twelve @-@ years old to work first as smugglers and later as paid assassins .

By 2006 , the Gulf Cartel and Los Zetas managed to defeat the forces of the Sinaloa Cartel in Nuevo Laredo . The latter cartel concentrated its efforts in northeastern Mexico , becoming dominant there . Los Zetas started to expand into other criminal activities beyond drug trafficking . Under Treviño Morales , the organization smuggled immigrants to the United States , carried out extortions and kidnappings , sold bootlegged CDs and DVDs , and intimidated and / or killed residents who failed to cooperate with them . Treviño Morales remained in charge of Los Zetas in the state of Nuevo León and in Piedras Negras , Coahuila , until March 2007 . He was reassigned to the coastal state of Veracruz , shortly after high @-@ ranking Zetas leader Efraín Teodoro Torres (alias Z @-@ 14) was killed in a gun battle at a local horse race . Though Cárdenas Guillén was imprisoned in 2003 , he reportedly directed the Gulf Cartel and Los Zetas behind bars ; when he was extradited to the United States in 2007 , Treviño Morales and Heriberto Lazcano Lazcano pushed for Los Zetas ' independence from the Gulf Cartel .

In November 2007 , the city of Laredo , Texas , issued an arrest warrant for Treviño in connection with a 2006 double homicide in Texas . In 2008 , Treviño Morales and Lazcano Lazcano , the two leaders of Los Zetas , forged an alliance with the Beltrán Leyva Cartel . It had just gone to war with the Sinaloa Cartel , believing that El Chapo Guzmán , their leader , had betrayed them . Treviño Morales subsequently joined them to kill the leader of the Sinaloa Cartel . Government sources said Los Zetas were fighting for control against La Federación (The Federation) , an alliance of several drug trafficking groups led by Joaquín El Chapo Guzmán and Ismael El Mayo Zambada , two drug lords who used to work for the Beltrán Leyva Cartel .

In February 2008 , Lazcano Lazcano sent Treviño Morales to kill rival drug traffickers and take control of the drug trafficking routes in Guatemala . Reportedly , he carried out a military @-@ like ambush that resulted in the death of the Guatemalan drug lord Juan José León Ardón (alias Juancho) in March . An unnamed U.S. official said that Treviño Morales may have been the man who fired the bullet that killed the drug kingpin . Having succeeded outside of Mexico , Treviño Morales was appointed by Lazcano Lazcano as the national commander of Los Zetas , a position traditionally reserved to Zetas members with military background . In this position , Treviño Morales

had a say in nearly all the decisions Los Zetas made at a national level , creating some resentment among the old @-@ generation commanders of Los Zetas who , unlike him , had been in the Mexican Armed Forces before turning to the drug trade .

= = Leadership position = =

Treviño Morales acted as a cartel ' gate @-@ keeper , ' and his people collected a piso (tariff) at all drug territories controlled by Los Zetas . He controlled the highly lucrative Nuevo Laredo plaza (turf) , across the border from Laredo , Texas . He bribed and intimidated officials to help maintain control , and responded to any challenges to his authority or control with brutal violence . Treviño was feared and very few local journalists dared to write about him . He was alleged to favored a torture method known as the guiso (stew) , in which people are stuffed into an oil barrel , doused with gasoline , and set on fire to burn alive . His violent behavior gained him " the notoriety of a cult figure . " He reportedly survived gun battles unharmed , avoided making alliances with anyone , dismembered dozens of victims while they were still alive and dumped them , and " seemed unafraid to die . " Organization members claimed that Treviño Morales enjoyed driving around the city in a car , pointing at people randomly and saying , " kill this one and kill that one . " A former hitman who worked for him told the press in 2013 that Treviño Morales could not sleep at night if he did not kill someone . He also said that the drug lord would ask his victims how they wanted to be killed . Journalist Alfredo Corchado , head of The Dallas Morning News in Mexico , wrote in one of his books that Treviño Morales enjoyed eating out the hearts of his victims ? even when they were still alive ? because he believed that doing that would make him invincible among his enemies and authorities .

Treviño Morales reportedly coordinated several violent attacks throughout Mexico , including the murder of 72 migrants in 2010 and the massacre of 193 people a year later in San Fernando , Tamaulipas . He is also believed to have threatened to shoot down the plane of the former President Felipe Calderón in August 2012 while on a trip to the state of Tamaulipas . Although it was not the first time Calderón received death threats from organized crime , the authorities deemed the drug lord 's threat as credible , and urged the President to cancel his trip (though he ultimately went anyway) . Under Treviño Morales ' leadership , Los Zetas were considered by the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) to be highly sophisticated , advanced , and one of the most dangerous criminal organizations operating in Mexico and the hemisphere . He was widely regarded as one of the most violent drug lords operating in Mexico .

Treviño Morales reportedly moved around through Mexico and Central America , and often met with Colombian drug lords in Mexico City , the nation 's capital , to do business . To escape law enforcement notice , he used " caravans " of purported businessmen and religious persons . In the northern part of the country , he reportedly maintained a close tie with a number of politicians . His brother Omar Treviño Morales (Z @-@ 42) leads Los Zetas in the Gulf of Mexico .

= = Split between Los Zetas and the Gulf Cartel = =

Cárdenas Guillén was arrested in Matamoros , Tamaulipas , in 2003 and extradited to the United States in 2007 . While in prison in Mexico , he reportedly coordinated the Gulf Cartel and Los Zetas from his prison cell . But with his extradition , Treviño Morales 's organization experienced a leadership crisis . La Compañía (The Company) , a name used to describe the Gulf Cartel and Los Zetas as a conglomerate , remained in a loose cooperation until early 2010 , when violence erupted between both groups . On 18 January 2010 , several members of the Gulf Cartel kidnapped Víctor Peña Mendoza (alias Concord 3) , a leader of Los Zetas and close associate and friend of Treviño Morales . When he was held captive , Peña Mendoza was asked to switch alliances and join the Gulf Cartel , but he refused , earning a beating followed by execution , presumably carried out by Samuel Flores Borrego .

Treviño Morales heard about the incident and issued an ultimatum to Flores Borrego and Gulf Cartel leader Jorge Eduardo Costilla Sánchez :

Hand over the assassin of my friend , you son of a bitch ... You have until the 25th , if you don 't comply , there will be war .

Both of the Gulf Cartel leaders ignored the command , and Treviño Morales moved swiftly to avenge the death of his former comrade . On 30 January 2010 , Treviño Morales kidnapped and slaughtered 16 Gulf Cartel members in Reynosa , Tamaulipas , marking the start of the cartel war between the Gulf Cartel and Los Zetas in the Mexican states of Tamaulipas , Nuevo León , and Veracruz that has led to thousands of deaths . Los Zetas used violent and intimidatory tactics to expand , forging a reputation as Mexico 's most violent drug trafficking organization . It managed to take control of most of the territories owned by the Gulf Cartel when they had essentially served as a single organization . With Treviño Morales as the second @-@ in @-@ command of the criminal organization , Los Zetas began killing Gulf Cartel members and other rival drug traffickers en masse and winning their territories .

= = Infighting in Los Zetas = =

In 2011 , however , Treviño Morales 's criminal organization entered a new internal strife after Jesús Enrique Rejón Aguilar (alias El Mamito) , one of their highest @-@ ranking leaders , was arrested in July . Though he did not call out any names , he stated that someone within Los Zetas had betrayed him . Shortly thereafter , alleged organized crime members uploaded a narcocorrido music video on YouTube portraying Treviño Morales " as the New Judas " and accusing him of setting up the arrests and deaths of other commanders within the criminal organization and being disloyal to Lazcano Lazcano , his boss . In several articles published in August 2012 , a U.S. law enforcement official told the press that Treviño Morales had successfully taken the leadership of the cartel and displaced Heriberto Lazcano Lazcano , the long @-@ time leader . Treviño Morales began to take over the assets of Los Zetas and was working to remove Lazcano Lazcano as the head since early 2010 . Amidst the Zetas civil war , many high @-@ ranking members in Los Zetas began to fall . High @-@ ranking Zetas leader Iván Velázquez Caballero (alias El Talibán) was arrested in September 2012 , presumably set up either by rival gang members or gangsters aligned with a group related to Treviño Morales . On 6 October 2012 , drug lord Salvador Alfonso Martínez Escobedo (alias La Ardilla) was arrested in Nuevo Laredo by the Mexican Navy . After Velázquez 's fall , a split off group known as Los Legionarios (The Legionaries) was born in Nuevo Laredo and vowed to bring down Treviño Morales for allegedly betraying him . A second faction from Los Zetas , known as Sangre Zeta (Zetas Blood) , also broke up from the organization to join forces against him .

The active role of Treviño Morales got him the loyalty and respect of many in Los Zetas , and eventually many stopped paying to Lazcano Lazcano . In order to avoid his arrest or death from betrayal , Lazcano Lazcano reportedly fled the country and lived in Germany and Costa Rica for an unknown time with surrounding rumors that he had terminal cancer . Back in Mexico , Treviño Morales had become the stronger of the two in Los Zetas . Lazcano Lazcano was then killed by the Mexican Navy in the state of Coahuila on 7 October 2012 , and Treviño Morales succeeded him as the top leader of Los Zetas .

= = Bounty and indictments = =

In 2009 in New York and in 2010 in Washington , the U.S. Department of Justice released an indictment against Treviño Morales for conspiracy to manufacture and distribute cocaine into the United States from Mexico and Guatemala . There was a bounty for him in Mexico set at \$ 30 million MXN (US \$ 2 @.@ 3 million) and another one in the U.S. at US \$ 5 million (\$ 62 @.@ 4 million MXN) . Los Zetas are responsible for the smuggling of multiple tons of cocaine , marijuana , and heroin into the United States from Mexico annually . He was also considered one of Mexico 's most @-@ wanted drug lords .

Treviño Morales is known by various aliases : L @-@ 40 (40 , Z @-@ 40 , Zeta 40) , Comandante Cuarenta , El Cuarenta , David Estrada @-@ Corado , and La Mona .

= = = Kingpin Act sanction = = =

On 20 July 2009 , the United States Department of the Treasury sanctioned Treviño Morales under the Foreign Narcotics Kingpin Designation Act (sometimes referred to simply as the " Kingpin Act ") , for his involvement in drug trafficking along with three other international criminals . The act prohibited U.S. citizens and companies from doing any kind of business activity with him , and virtually froze all his assets in the U.S.

= = Arrest = =

A month before his capture , U.S. authorities had been passing down information to their counterparts in Mexico that Treviño Morales was making frequent visits to the Nuevo Laredo border area to see his newborn baby . They traded this intelligence information from wiretaps conversations and informants ' tips . Treviño Morales was apprehended by the Mexican Marines in Anáhuac , Nuevo León , near the border of Tamaulipas state , at around 3 : 45 a.m. on 15 July 2013 without a single shot fired . The truck he was traveling in was intercepted on the road by a Black Hawk helicopter from the Navy ; when the Marines got off the helicopter and tried to apprehend him , the capo attempted to escape by running through some bushes but was later caught . He was in possession of US \$ 2 million (\$ 25 @, @ 316 @, @ 100 MXN) in cash , eight weapons and hundreds of rounds of ammunition ; two other men were arrested with him and taken into custody . Rumors of Treviño Morales 's arrest and a mugshot of him in custody began to circulate through Twitter and other social media outlets around noon that day , but the Mexican government did not confirm the arrest , nor did the U.S. authorities receive a formal confirmation until hours later .

At the time of his arrest , Treviño Morales had pending charges for organized crime involvement , drug trafficking , torture , money laundering , and the illegal use of firearms under Mexican law , among other charges . However , he only declared the money and firearms that were confiscated during his arrest . Following his arrest , the drug lord was flown to Mexico City and kept at the SEIDO installations , Mexico 's organized crime investigatory agency . On 19 July 2013 , he was transferred to the Federal Social Readaptation Center No. 1 maximum security prison in Almoloya de Juárez , State of Mexico , via helicopter . On January 2014 , a New York federal district court issued other criminal charges against the drug lord . The investigation alleged that Treviño Morales conspired to order killings against rival gangsters of Los Zetas , members of his own criminal organization , and Mexican policemen and personnel of the Mexican Army from September 2004 to July 2013 . The court , which sought his extradition , also stated that the drug lord conspired to traffic drugs to the U.S.

= = Family = =

Miguel 's brother José Treviño Morales was arrested on 12 June 2012 by a combined U.S. federal task force . He has been indicted as one of the money launderers for the Zetas through an Oklahoma @-@ based American Quarter Horse racing operation . His son Alejandro Treviño Chávez was killed during a shootout in the state of Coahuila on 5 October 2012 by a law enforcement group ; in response , Miguel ordered the murder of José Eduardo Moreira , nephew of governor of Coahuila Rubén Moreira , and son of Humberto Moreira (Governor of the State of Coahuila from 2005 to 2011) .

Omar Treviño Morales , his younger brother , is a high @-@ level leader in Los Zetas and one of Mexico 's most @-@ wanted drug lords . The U.S government is offering up to US \$ 5 million (\$ 62 @. @ 4 million MXN) for information that leads to his arrest and conviction . He is responsible for several murders and kidnappings carried out in Nuevo Laredo between 2005 and 2006 . The authorities consider him the successor and " heir " of Los Zetas following Miguel 's arrest .

Miguel 's older brother , Juan Francisco Treviño Morales , is currently imprisoned in the United States ; his son (and nephew of Miguel) , Juan Francisco Treviño Chávez , alias El Quico , was

arrested in Monterrey on 15 June 2012 . Eduardo Treviño Treviño , another nephew of Miguel , was arrested in Nuevo Laredo in May 2013 and awaits an extradition to the United States for kidnapping and drug trafficking charges that date back to 2010 . Miguel 's wife Juanita del Carmen Ríos Hernández was included in the Foreign Narcotics Kingpin Designation Act on February 2014 , banning U.S. citizens from doing any kind of business activities with companies under her name .