

Mexican, U.S. agents square off Border Patrol's killing of teen in Mexico adds to immigration fury.

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Byline: BY CHRISTOPHER SHERMAN AND OLIVIA TORRES Associated Press

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Body

CIUDAD JUAREZ, **Mexico** - Pointing their rifles, **Mexican** security forces chased away **U.S.** authorities investigating the shooting of a 15-year-old **Mexican** by a **U.S. Border Patrol agent** on the banks of the Rio Grande, the FBI and witnesses told The Associated Press on Wednesday.

The **killing** of the **Mexican** by **U.S.** authorities - the second in less than two weeks - has exposed the distrust between the two countries that lies just below the surface and has enraged Mexicans who see the death of the boy on **Mexican** soil as an act of murder.

Mexico's government says the number of Mexicans injured by **U.S. immigration** authorities has increased this year.

Shortly after the boy was shot, **Mexican** soldiers arrived at the scene and pointed their guns at the **Border Patrol agents** across the riverbank while bystanders screamed insults and hurled rocks and firecrackers, FBI spokeswoman Andrea Simmons said. She said the **agents** were forced to withdraw.

"It pretty quickly got very intense over on the **Mexican** side," she said, **adding** that FBI **agents** showed up later and resumed the investigation, even as **Mexican** authorities pointed guns at them from across the river.

A relative of the dead boy who had been playing with him told the AP that the Mexicans - whom he described as federal police, not soldiers - pointed their guns only when the Americans waded into the mud in an apparent attempt to cross into **Mexico**.

The **Mexican** authorities accused the Americans of trying to recover evidence from **Mexican** soil and threatened to **kill** them if they crossed the **border**, prompting both sides to draw their guns, said the 16-year-old boy who asked not to be further identified for fear of reprisal.

The confrontation occurred Monday night over the body of Sergio Adrian Hernandez Huereka, who died of his wounds beside the column of a railroad bridge connecting Ciudad Juarez, **Mexico**, and El Paso, Texas.

Each government has made veiled accusations suggesting misconduct on the part of the other's law enforcement **agents**.

Hernandez was found 20 feet into **Mexico**, and an autopsy revealed that the fatal shot was fired at a relatively close range, according to Arturo Sandoval, a spokesman for the Chihuahua state attorney general's office. **Mexican**

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authorities said a .40-caliber shell casing was found near the body, suggesting that the **U.S. Border Patrol agent** might have crossed into **Mexico** to shoot the boy.

That would violate the rules for **Border Patrol agents**, who are supposed to stay on the **U.S.** side - and could open the **agent** to a **Mexican** homicide prosecution.

A **U.S.** official close to the investigation told the AP that authorities have a video showing that the **Border Patrol agent** did not cross into **Mexico**. In fact, the official said, the video shows what appear to be members of **Mexican** law enforcement crossing onto the **U.S.** side, picking something up and returning to **Mexico**. The official was not cleared to speak about the video and spoke only on condition of anonymity.

Alejandro Pariente, Chihuahua state's regional deputy attorney general, said the **U.S. Border Patrol** has given him video that he is reviewing. He declined to describe it except to say that it has sped up the investigation.

The two killings have provoked anger in **Mexico** like no other recent controversy surrounding **immigration**, including Arizona's new law making it a state crime to be an illegal immigrant and President Barack Obama's decision to send the National Guard to the **border**.

Although many Mexicans were unhappy with both initiatives, popular and official reaction had been subdued, in contrast to street protests seen in previous years when the **U.S.** has cracked down on the **border**. Many Mexicans have since given up hope for a quick solution to the **immigration** problem, while other issues including growing drug violence have taken center stage in relations between the two countries.

That has started to change with the back-to-back deaths of two Mexicans at the **border**: the teenager **killed** Monday, and migrant Anastasio Hernandez, 42, who died after a Customs and **Border** Protection officer shocked him with a stun gun at the San Ysidro **border** crossing that separates San Diego and Tijuana, **Mexico**.

Anastasio Hernandez, who had lived in the **U.S.** since he was 14, was buried in San Diego on Wednesday.

Among those at the funeral was Humberto Navarrete, who said he was walking across the pedestrian bridge near Tijuana when he witnessed the confrontation and started recording it with his cell phone. In the blurry video, a man can be heard crying and yelling, "Help me! Help me, please!"

San Diego police detective Kevin Rooney said he is trying to reach Navarrete to see the footage and interview him for his investigation.

Graphic

Photo by GREGORY BULL • Associated Press - Relatives and friends of Anastasio Hernandez carry his casket toward a church before funeral services Wednesday in San Diego. Hernandez died May 28 after being shocked with a stun gun by a **U.S. border agent**.

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