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Polls

Ebrard is most popular leftist political figure

A BGC/Excelsior national telephone poll found that Mexico City mayor **Marcelo Ebrard** continues to be the most popular PRD figure in Mexico. Those having a good or very good opinion of Ebrard were 59% while only 12% had a bad or very bad opinion. **AMLO** continues to be the best-known figure on the Left, but his negatives outweigh his positives by 49% to 29%. The other firebrands (Muñoz Ledo, Dolores Padierna, and Fernández Noroña) also have very high negatives. ([Excelsior 11/2](#))

	Name Recog nition	Opinion	
		Good/ Very Good	Bad/ Very Bad
Andrés Manuel López Obrador Former presidential candidate	98%	29%	49%
Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas Former presidential candidate	84%	42%	22%
Marcelo Ebrard Mexico City mayor	80%	59%	12%
Porfirio Muñoz Ledo Coordinator of FAP coalition	53%	32%	38%
Alejandro Encinas Leader of PRD in Chamber	49%	34%	24%
Lázaro Cárdenas Former Governor of Michoacán	48%	40%	23%
Dolores Padierna Former borough president in Mex. City	45%	24%	44%
Leonel Godoy Governor of Michoacán	43%	25%	31%
Jesús Ortega PRD party president	40%	33%	21%
Amalia García Governor of Zacatecas	35%	48%	20%
Carlos Navarrete Senate leader	24%	28%	31%
Gerardo Fernández Noroña PT Deputy	22%	30%	47%

Key Dates

11/15: Deadline for budget approval

by 12/31: Terms end for President of Banco de México, CNDH, and two Supreme Court ministers

PRI avoids costs of voting for higher taxes, gets benefit

The Senate passed the major revenue measures previously voted by the Chamber of Deputies, including a 1% increase in the value added tax. The key vote was 53-28, with 7 abstentions. The PAN, PVEM, and one PANAL senator voted in favor; the PRD, PT, and Convergencia voted against. Most of the PRI senators left the Senate chamber prior to the vote and the seven who remained abstained, based on an agreement with the PAN. Commentators noted that the major beneficiaries of the VAT increase will be the state governors (mostly PRIistas), who will get one-third of the additional tax take. A summary of the tax measures can be found [here](#). Government Secretary **Fernando Gómez Mont** applauded the vote: "The agreements reached signify patriotic conduct by the actors; the federal government wants to recognize the will of the parties in putting the national interest ahead of politics." ([Universal 11/2](#))

President blasts private sector over taxes

In two separate speeches, President **Felipe Calderón** vehemently attacked the private sector for its opposition to the fiscal program, alleging that the largest groups "rarely" paid taxes: "What seems to me unacceptable is that the giant corporations demand that the government cut spending, and the government cuts it; that they demand that the government tax food and medicine for the poorest, but ... on average they pay only 1.7% in taxes. This cannot be! I am not asking for sacrifices. ... I am asking that the companies also pay, even if just a part, of the taxes that the Mexican people need," he said. Columnist **Sergio Sarmiento** said that Calderón's 'economic mentors' seemed to be former Presidents **Luis Echeverría** and **José López Portillo**. Sarmiento also claimed that Calderón's math was bad and that tax payments by large corporates were 26% of pre-tax income, "more than in other countries." ([Milenio 10/30](#), [Reforma 11/2](#))

Fate of radio spectrum royalty payments unclear

The Senate voted to kill the 2-year exemption from royalty payments for the soon to be auctioned radio spectrum frequency blocks for wireless carriers. However, the Chamber voted 252-143 in a non-party line vote to reject the Senate version and reinstate the exemption. PAN deputy **Javier Corral** called it "an undue fiscal privilege" for highly profitable telecoms companies at a time when the rest of Mexicans were being asked to pay higher taxes. The Chamber and the Senate must now reconcile their positions. ([Universal 11/1](#))

As mayor takes office, bodies found of gangsters who made death threats

On the day that **Mauricio Fernández** took office as the PAN mayor of the Monterrey suburb of San Pedro Garza García, a gangster who had threatened to kill him was found murdered in Mexico City. In early October, the mayor-elect had said, "There are some intelligence groups that report to me directly—groups for rough work—or as I call them, a kind of cleaning crew, that will be responsible for convincing, in any way necessary, those criminal groups that there isn't any room for them." Fernández announced the death of 'El Negro' Saldaña, who was accused of running a kidnapping and extortion ring in Garza García, hours before the Mexico City authorities reported finding his corpse and those of three other men, all executed. Fernández called the discovery of the bodies on the day of his inauguration a 'coincidence.' ([Reforma 11/2](#), [Universal 11/2](#))

Twitter campaign (maybe) beats back Internet tax

The cyber campaign waged on Twitter to exempt Internet services from the new 3% telecoms tax appeared victorious, as the Senate voted to reject the tax. Activists noted that the fine print excepted Internet services only when purchased separately; if purchased as part of a package with other telecoms services, they are probably subject to the tax. ([SDP Noticias 10/31](#))