

Lat/Am

Peru's leader names new PM: Peruvian President Pedro Pablo Kuczynski appointed a former economy minister as his new prime minister Sunday, two days after a no-confidence vote by the opposition-led congress forced the entire Cabinet to resign.

Mercedes Araoz, who is also a lawmaker and one of Peru's two vice presidents, is the new chief minister in a reconstituted Cabinet. She served as economy minister during part of the 2006-11 administration of President Alan Garcia.

Araoz replaced Fernando Zavala, who lost Friday's vote of confidence by lawmakers. The single-house congress is led by the opposition party of Keiko Fujimori, who is the daughter of jailed former President Alberto Fujimori and loser of a close 2016 presidential runoff election to Kuczynski.

All 19 ministers in the previous Cabinet were forced to resign under Peru's constitution because of the no-confidence vote. Kuczynski reappointed six of the 19 ministers in the previous Cabinet.

The upheaval forced the president to cancel a trip to participate in this week's meeting of the UN General Assembly. Kuczynski was to have met with US President Donald Trump, along with the presidents of Brazil and Colombia, during the trip to New York. (AP)

Mexican troops kill 8: Security officials in the



The Hotel Capri in Havana, Cuba, is photographed on Sept 12. New details about a string of mysterious 'health attacks' on US diplomats in Cuba indicate the incidents were narrowly confined within specific rooms or parts of rooms. Aside from their homes, officials said Americans were attacked in at least one hotel, the recently renovated Hotel Capri, steps from the Malecon, Havana's iconic, waterside promenade. (AP)

Mexican state of Guerrero say eight civilians and one soldier have been killed in a clash that began with gunmen dressed in camouflage ambushing an army patrol.

State security spokesman Roberto Alvarez Heredia says the soldiers came under attack late Saturday near the community of Pachivia, in a zone where the Familia Michoacana drug gang is active. One soldier died and another was wounded before the troops returned fire. (AP)

6 dead in Rio gang violence: Shoot-outs between drug gangs left at least six people dead

over the weekend in two Rio de Janeiro favelas, the latest in a flare-up of violence in recent months.

Through much of Sunday morning, heavy exchanges of gunfire terrorized residents of Rocinha, Rio's biggest favela with 75,000 inhabitants.

Nearly a quarter the city's 6.45 million population live in favelas, the term Brazilians give for the poor, densely populated neighborhoods clustered on the city's steep hillsides.

"Clashes between traffickers in Rocinha. Avoid the area," Rio's military police warned on the force's Twitter account. (AFP)

Cuba

Health of 21 Americans affected

US eyes closing embassy in Cuba

NEW YORK, Sept 18, (AP) — The Trump administration is considering closing down the recently reopened US Embassy in Havana following a string of unexplained incidents harming the health of American diplomats in Cuba, Secretary of State Rex Tillerson says.

Tillerson's comments were the strongest indication to date that the United States might mount a major diplomatic response, potentially jeopardizing the historic restart of relations between the US and Cuba. The two former foes reopened embassies in Washington and Havana in 2015 after a half-century of estrangement.

"We have it under evaluation," Tillerson said of a possible embassy closure. "It's a very serious issue with respect to the harm that certain individuals have suffered. We've brought some of those people home. It's under review."

Of the 21 medically confirmed US in-

dividuals affected — diplomats and their families — some have permanent hearing loss or concussions, while others suffered nausea, headaches and ear-ringing. Some are struggling with concentration or common word recall. The Associated Press has reported. Some victims felt vibrations or heard loud sounds mysteriously audible in only parts of rooms, leading investigators to consider a potential "sonic attack." Others heard nothing but later developed symptoms.

Tillerson once called the events "health attacks," but the State Department has since used the term "incidents" while emphasizing the US still doesn't know what has occurred. Cuba has denied any involvement or responsibility but stressed that it's eager to help the US resolve the matter.

The US has said the tally of Americans affected could grow as more cases are potentially detected.

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