

# *Peña Nieto Calls on Mexicans to Vote Despite Election Protests*

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Mexico City, March 26 (teleSUR-RHC) Mexican President Enrique Peña Nieto addressed his country late Wednesday, calling on citizens to vote in the upcoming congressional elections, despite calls for boycotts.

"Mexico is a democracy with more active people. As citizens we have to participate and exercise our vote," he said and added that all Mexicans can be sure that their vote counts and will be respected," the embattled president said.

The president argued that these elections will be the first after electoral reforms were approved and stressed that new electoral authorities and stricter rules will apply in an attempt to address concerns about transparency.

Legislative elections, scheduled for June 7 will elect the 500 legislators for Mexico's Chamber of Deputies. Peña Nieto's request comes six months after 43 students from Ayotzinapa were forcibly disappeared in the southern state of Guerrero.

Relatives of the disappeared students said they will demand the suspension of local elections in the state, arguing that candidates have failed to mention the case in their campaigns.

The president is also facing a widespread social unrest caused by the disappearance of the Ayotzinapa students, accusations of corruption, as well as high levels of insecurity and decreasing social freedoms in the country.

Six months ago, Peña Nieto was lauded as a reformer from certain sectors, after passing 11 neoliberal structural reforms during his first 20 months of government. But the reforms have not yielded tangible social or economic improvements.

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