

# *Mexican President Increasingly Isolated Even Within Own Party*

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Mexico City, March 6 (teleSUR-RHC)-- Embattled Mexican President Enrique Peña Nieto is becoming increasingly isolated, with members of his own political party privately expressing concern over his handling of a string of crises and scandals to hit his administration.

Reuters spoke with two dozen lawmakers and government officials from Peña Nieto's party, the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) who were returned to power after a 12 year absence. The PRI had ruled Mexico for over 70 years prior to losing the elections in 2000.

Political parties in Mexico are gearing up for mid-term elections in June and PRI lawmakers fear that the president's scandals will negatively affect their electoral prospects.

A poll by Buendia & Laredo showed the PRI's support dropping from 42 percent in November to 30 percent in mid-February. PRI lawmakers attribute this drop to the mishandling of crises -- including the forced disappearance of 43 students in Ayotzinapa -- by the government of Peña Nieto.

The president's own approval ratings, which have gone as low as 25 percent recently, took another hit when it was revealed that he, his wife, and his finance minister had all bought or used homes built by a firm that has won millions of dollars in government contracts on his watch.

"Never has a president been this isolated," said a veteran PRI politician.

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