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# PRI selects presidential contender

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MEXICO CITY - A former Gulf Coast state governor easily won the little-contested primary election to decide the 2006 presidential candidate of the party that ruled Mexico for seven straight decades, early results showed Sunday night.

Roberto Madrazo, who served as head of the Institutional Revolutionary Party, or PRI, received 92 percent of the vote, while the only other candidate, little-known Everardo Moreno, got 8 percent, with 28 percent of voting centers reporting, said Mariano Palacios, the party's president.

Official results won't be available until later in the week, and while it was unclear how many party supporters voted, officials acknowledged that the race was marred by low turnout.

The primary marked the first time the PRI has chosen a presidential candidate without controlling the presidency, and though the party has been marked by division, Moreno was never expected to mount a serious challenge.

Madrazo, an old-style PRI power broker, is the former governor of Tabasco state.

The PRI controlled Mexico's presidency from its founding in 1929 until President Vicente Fox of the National Action Party was elected in 2000. Fox is barred from running again.

Besides National Action, the PRI bid to regain the presidency will face ex-Mexico City Mayor Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador of the leftist Democratic Revolution Party, who leads most public opinion polls ahead of the election in July.

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