

# **News Items and Public Crime Summary for Week Ending April 16, 2011**

## **Curacao – Chairman of Parliament to Attend Parlatino Meeting**

Chairman of Parliament Ivar Asjes will attend a Latin American parliament (Parlatino) meeting in Panama this week. Parlatino is a regional Latin America and Caribbean organization. Participating countries will discuss political, economic, social and cultural developments in the region. (Various media)

## **Aruba – Businesses Continue to Sell Counterfeit Merchandise**

Businesses in Aruba continue to sell counterfeit merchandise, despite controls by law enforcement agencies for intellectual property rights violations. Numerous counterfeit products were found at various stores, during an investigation by an Amigoe newspaper reporter. It is not uncommon that counterfeit merchandise is illegally sold on the market, but a new round of raids is planned the report stated. (Various media)

## **Curaçao - Spaceport Tickets For Sale**

Space Experience Curaçao (SXC) has started ticket sales (US \$90,000) for manned flights into space from Hato International Airport. With a planned start date in January 2014, SXC will market, and XCOR Aerospace, a small, privately-held California C Corporation, will operate, suborbital space tourism flights and scientific research missions out of Space Port Curacao.

Space Experience Curacao (SXC) and XCOR Aerospace, Inc., jointly announced the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the wet lease of a production version of the Lynx suborbital spacecraft, pending U.S. government approvals to station the vehicle on Curacao. (Various media)

## **Aruba – Opposition: Government and Valero Reached Secret Deal**

Oil drilling and exploration discussions in Aruba's territorial waters have started again in parliament, after MEP MP Booshi Weever stated San Antonio-based Valero Oil Refinery and the Aruba government reached a secret deal for research into and drilling for oil. Senator Weever has asked various questions related to this topic in parliament and is waiting for answers. Also, a Trinidad and Tobago-based company has expressed interest, the MP said. (Extra)

## **Aruba – Vessel Carrying Drugs Intercepted**

A joint effort by various Aruban Law Enforcement entities resulted in the interception of the vessel Susana within Aruban territorial waters yesterday. Law enforcement officials found an undisclosed amount of narcotics aboard. The crew of two was arrested. (Various media)

## **Curacao – 749 Chinese Chefs Applied For A Residency Permit**

Chinese citizens were ranked 6th among foreign nationals who applied for a residence permit in Curacao between January 2003 and July 2007. Columbians were ranked at the top with 13,208 requests followed by Dominicans (7701), European Dutch (7272), Haitians (5356), Venezuelans (3795), and Chinese (2715), according to research conducted by Forensic Services Caribbean (FSC) upon request of the Justice Minister. The Justice Department started an investigation after indications of a malfunctioning work and residence permit process and even possible fraud within the justice and labor department chain. Various civil servants reportedly had access to the Navas-system which is used for foreigner registration, process assessment and permit issuance. 647 of the 2715 Chinese nationals had requested labor permit extensions and 519 requested a residence permit extension to stay with their parents. Immigration received a total of 1241 (first application and extension) labor permit requests. According to the researchers, various permits were issued by the government without following mandatory rules and regulations, or the reasons for granting the permission were not recorded properly.

In some cases, a labor permit was issued while the company of the employer was closed or the position was not available. In another case, the reason for issuing a three-year permit instead of a one-year permit was not properly documented, and in one case, a permit was issued although crucial documents were missing and the guarantor was unable to prove he/she could support the applicant.

Chinese residency permit requests were received for restaurant chefs (749), agricultural (81), live-in maids/butlers (69), business owners (69), administrators (67) and company managers (31) for businesses such as laundrettes, restaurants or convenience stores. 180 (7%) of the 2,715 requests were denied, comparable with other nationalities. The report was publicized in September 2009 and the Justice Department forwarded the report to the Public Prosecutor in December 2009. The report did not comprise enough evidence to prosecute, according to a public prosecutor's office spokesperson. (Various media)

## **Curacao – Colombian Vice-President Garzón Will Visit Curacao**

Colombian Vice-President Angelino Garzón will visit Curacao tomorrow for a meeting with Curacao PM Gerrit Schotte and to attend the 75<sup>th</sup> year anniversary celebration of the Civil Servants Union (ABVO). (Extra)

## **Curacao – Census 2011: Population Grows**

Preliminary results of the Census 2011 revealed that the Curacao population has grown from 130,627 in 2001, to 131,051 this year. 71,113 (54.3%) females and 59,951 (45.7%) males live in Curacao. The final result will be released later this year. (Various media)

## **Curacao – Chamber of Commerce Short Term Economic Review**

The Curacao Chamber of Commerce has recently released an update of its Short Term Economic Review 2010-2012. The 5-page report is attached. (Various media)

## **St. Maarten – Budget Approved**

St. Maarten has reportedly reached a budget agreement with the Committee for Financial Supervision (CFT). Three weeks ago, the Kingdom Council of Ministers gave St. Maarten one last chance to reach an agreement with the CFT. Earlier this week, the St. Maarten Government submitted a balanced budget which is mandated by the Netherlands Antilles' dismantling agreement. The Kingdom Government has the option to more closely supervise a Dutch Kingdom entity that does not meet certain requirements. Article 43.2 of the Dutch Kingdom constitution states that safeguarding of fundamental human rights and freedoms, legal certainty, and good governance is a Kingdom affair. (Various media)

## **St. Maarten – Counterfeit Handbags and Clothing Destroyed**

More than a thousand counterfeit handbags and clothing were destroyed yesterday when a heavy steamroller was used to crush them. The counterfeit Lacoste, Tommy Hilfiger, Playboy Enterprises, Chanel, Abercrombie & Fitch, New Era Cap, Lois Vuitton, Tiffany and Company, The Polo Ralph Lauren Company, S. Tous, Adidas, Reebok, Hollister, Christian Dior, Marc Jacobs, and Bvlgari labels were confiscated during raids conducted by local authorities. (Daily Herald)

## **Aruba – Van Der Sloot Involved in Stabbing Incident?**

Joran van der Sloot, suspected in the disappearance of American teen Natalee Holloway in 2005, has been involved in several stabbing incidents in a Peruvian prison, Dutch media reported. Van der Sloot, charged with murdering a woman in Peru, has reportedly stabbed three people and had been put into solitary confinement several times. A lawyer for Van der Sloot denied the stabbing incidents. Van der Sloot, 23, is accused of first-degree murder in the killing of Stephany Flores, whom he met at a Lima casino and allegedly killed in a hotel room. The Aruban remains the key suspect in the unsolved 2005 disappearance of Holloway, an 18-year-old Alabama student he met in Aruba. Van der Sloot was indicted last June in Alabama on federal wire fraud and extortion charges for allegedly trying to extort US \$250,000 from Holloway's mother, Beth Twitty, in exchange for information on where she could find her daughter's body. (Aruba Post)

## **St. Maarten – JetBlue Launches Plan For Nonstop Daily Service**

New York-based JetBlue Airways, the largest carrier in Puerto Rico in terms of capacity, announced plans to launch nonstop daily service Luis Muñoz Marín International Airport in San Juan (SJU), Puerto Rico, to St. Maarten Prinses Juliana Airport (SXM), subject to receipt of government approval. This new route will be the value airline's eighth non-stop destination out of San Juan and its third out of St. Maarten.

Flights between San Juan and St. Maarten will go on sale at [www.jetblue.com](http://www.jetblue.com) soon, with service to begin November 17.

"I am pleased to learn of JetBlue's decision to begin servicing the SJU - SXM route," said the Minister of Tourism, Economic Affairs and Transportation of St. Maarten, Honorable Franklin Meyers. "Following our recent discussions in New York, JetBlue has proven to be a valuable partner since its initial entry into St. Maarten in 2008, providing daily service from New York as well as servicing St. Maarten from Boston. I am confident that together we will grow the San Juan - SXM route. This new service will open up the

possibility for potential visitors from key source markets besides Puerto Rico, namely, Ft. Lauderdale, Orlando and Boston, to come to the destination."

"The JetBlue, St. Maarten partnership has changed the landscape of tourism in St. Maarten," said Director of Tourism of St. Maarten, Regina LaBega. "The airfares from key source markets, for example, have become more affordable, therefore resulting in a larger volume of visitors to the destination as well as a higher visitor expenditure on island. The new SJU-SXM service by JetBlue, using the famous Embraer aircraft will certainly boost traffic in both directions, consequently contributing positively to our economy." (Various media)

## **CURAÇAO**

### ***Crime April 8 – 14***

On April 8, a car rental office in Cerrito was robbed by three men. The same evening, a couple near Riffort was robbed by three youths. On April 10, the casino at Breezes Curaçao Resort in Bapor Kibrá was robbed in a brazen morning robbery. When the casino safe could not be opened, the suspects robbed various employees. On April 14, occupants of a passing vehicle fired several shots at a home in Sans Souci. No injuries were reported. (Amigoe, Extra, Antilliaans Dagblad)

## **ARUBA**

### ***Crime April 8 – 14***

On April 8, there were three armed robberies: a minimarket in Cas Paloma was robbed by two men; a supermarket in Santa Cruz was robbed by three masked men; and a Domino's Pizza restaurant in Tanki Leendert was robbed by two men. On April 14, a Chinese minimarket in Savaneta was robbed by two masked men. (Diario Aruba, Amigoe)

### ***Port disaster exercise held***

On April 8, the security office of Aruba Ports Authority held a disaster exercise at the harbor. The exercise involved a called-in bomb threat on board the Freewinds cruise ship. The Dutch Royal Navy, Aruba Police Department, Aruba Fire Department, and ambulance service participated in the exercise. The aim was to test the harbor's security posture, communications and coordination among the different agencies, their reaction time, as well as evacuation procedures. The exercise forms part of the requirements to keep the International Ship and Port Facility Security Code (ISPS) certification. (Diario Aruba)

## **ST. MAARTEN**

### ***Crime April 8 – 14***

There were three incidents on April 9. A 'gypsy' (i.e. unlicensed) taxi driver attempted to rape a female passenger near Philipsburg. The victim used an excuse to exit the vehicle and ran off. A man near the Little League Ball Park on Pond Island was shot and injured during an altercation and the occupant of a vehicle fired several shots at a man in another vehicle in Philipsburg. No injuries were reported. On April 11, a French citizen was beaten and robbed by another 'gypsy' taxi driver in Mullet Bay. (Daily Herald, St. Maarten Island Time)

### ***Police conduct random checks of vehicles***

Police have conducted random checks of vehicles this week, concentrating on the type of vehicles used by 'gypsy' (i.e. illegal) taxi drivers as well as large trucks. Large vehicles were checked to make sure they are safe on the road and are not smuggling illegal immigrants or illegal products. Vans and other vehicles known to be used by 'gypsy' drivers were checked for passengers. The checks resulted in 15 fines and the confiscation of three cars. (Daily Herald)

### ***Agreement with Netherlands Forensic Institute***

An agreement was signed by St. Maarten Chief of Police Peter de Witte, acting for Minister of Justice Roland Duncan, and the Dutch Forensic Institute (NFI) on April 12. NFI provides forensic services to clients in the criminal justice system. NFI experts concentrate on the provision of objective and, if necessary, multidisciplinary forensic analyses, in an effort to improve the client's information position. With more than 30 forensic disciplines, NFI is the only institution in the Netherlands to offer such an extensive range of high tech forensic services. The St. Maarten Police Department is the first among the islands of the former Netherlands Antilles to have formally signed such an agreement. (St. Maarten Island Time, Daily Herald, Extra)

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*"The Weekly Press Summary is a compilation of stories running in the Dutch Caribbean press that is intended to alert readers about items of interest to them. There is no interpretation or verification of the facts contained therein."*